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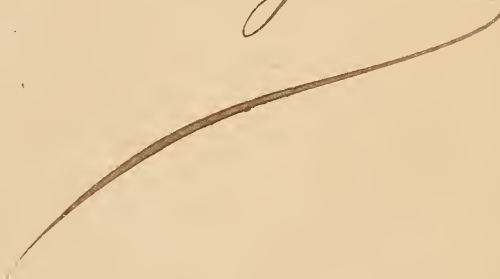
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Joel Russell Esq

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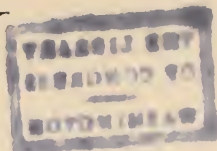
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# HISTORY



OF THE

## Reformed P. D. Church of Claverack.

A CENTENNIAL ADDRESS.

BY

REV. F. N. ZABRISKIE.

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"THOUGH thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: (for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow :) shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?"—JOB 8 : 7-10.

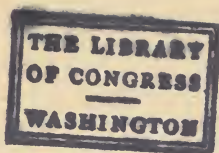
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HUDSON, N. Y.:

STEPHEN B. MILLER.

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## ILLUSTRATIONS.

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CHURCH, PARSONAGE, AND SEMINARY IN THEIR ORIGINAL STYLE.

(*Frontispiece.*)

LIKENESS OF REV. DR. GEBHARD.

LIKENESS OF REV. MR. SLUYTER.

CHURCH—IN 1867.

PARSONAGE—IN 1867.



## INTRODUCTION.

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ON the fifth of April, 1867, the Consistory of the Reformed Dutch Church of Claverack, responding to the enthusiastic desire of the congregation, resolved to hold a celebration, commemorative of the one hundredth year of their church edifice. They appointed the following committee to take charge of the arrangements for that occasion, namely :

REV. F. N. ZABRISKIE,  
JONAS R. DELEMATER,  
JOHN L. SAGENDORF,  
JOHN H. DICKIE,  
JAMES F. PHILIP, M.D.,

PETER HOFFMAN,  
MILTON MARTIN,  
ANTHONY VAN RENSSELAER,  
STEPHEN M. VAN WYCK,  
JEREMIAH M. RACE,

FRED. H. SNYDER.

The Committee, at a subsequent meeting, selected the twenty-eighth day of August as the date of the proposed celebration, and appointed the following sub-committees, namely :

*Committee of Public Exercises.*—Rev. Mr. Zabriskie.

*Committee of Invitation.*—Dr. Philip, Mr. Snyder, Rev. Mr. Zabriskie.

*Committee on Reception and Entertainment of Guests.*—Mr. Dickie, Mr. Race, Mr. Martin.

*Committee on Collation.*—Mr. Delemater, Mr. Sagendorf, Mr. Van Rensselaer, Mr. Van Wyck, Mr. Hoffman.

*Committee on Accounts.*—Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Martin, Mr. Delemater.

Wednesday, the twenty-eighth of August, proved to be a beautiful day. An occasional cloud and a continuous breeze moderated the summer heat. At an early hour, throngs of pilgrims to their ancient shrine, began to appear, on foot, in vehicles, and by the crowded railway trains, and, long before the bell rang for the hour of morning service, the church was filled to overflowing. It was estimated by those accustomed to such calculations that twenty-five hundred people were upon the ground during the day. Those within the building were fewer than those who could not obtain admittance. The whole county was largely represented, and the children of the church came back from their dispersion in parts remote, while many strangers were there from antiquarian tastes and interest in the things of

Zion. Among the clergy present were noticed Rev. Drs. Wyckoff, C. Van Cleef, Anson Dubois, Van Santvoord, Stryker, Lansing, and Porter; and Rev. Messrs. Edwin and John McC. Holmes, Himrod, Lyall, D. A. Jones, Boice, Van Gieson, J. G. Johnson, F. M. Bogardus, Corwin, Drury, Enyard, Lloyd, R. M. Whitbeck, Turner, Shepard, A. J. and E. N. Sebring, S. F. Searle, Roe, Nevins, and Horton of the Reformed Dutch Church; Rev. Mr. Bradbury and Rev. Jacob Best of the Presbyterian; Rev. Mr. Rosenberg and Rev. Mr. Felts of the Lutheran; and Rev. Mr. Ostrander of the Methodist. The names of the distinguished gentlemen who addressed the meeting in the grove are an indication of the character of the eminent laymen who graced the occasion with their presence.

Letters were received by the Committee of Invitation from the following: Hon. Schuyler Colfax,\* Hon. Stewart L. Woodford, Joel Munsell, Esq., of Albany, Hon. Francis Sylvester, Rev. D. D. Demarest, D.D., Rev. William H. Campbell, D.D., Rev. E. L. Hermance, Rev. B. F. Snyder, Rev. Joseph Scudder, B. Van Buren, Esq., and J. L. Woodward, Esq.

The recess in which the pulpit stands was tastefully decorated with festoons of evergreens entwined with flowers. Various beautiful bouquets were placed upon the pulpit and the tables. For these thoughtful and elegant offerings we are indebted to Mrs. John Miller, Mrs. Wortendyke, Mrs. David Valentine, and a member of the Twenty-first street Reformed Dutch Church, New-York.

An interesting feature of the occasion was the large number of antiquarian curiosities and other relics illustrative of the history of the church and community. The following is a list of them:

1. Ancient chest (ante-Revolutionary) containing the archives of the church. Among them is a Book of Records dating back 140 years.
2. Communion goblet, inscribed with the date 1765.
3. Collection-bag, furnished by Mrs. Sluyter.
4. Collection-bag, furnished by Mr. John Sharp.
5. Two old pulpit chairs.
6. Sundry Dutch and German Bibles and Psalm-Books in former use in this church, furnished by John Miller, Jonas R. Delemater, Dr. Philip, Alexander Van Rensselaer, Teunis Snyder, S. Milham, and Miss Rebecca Van Deusen. Some of these are as much as 200 years old.
7. Portrait of Dominie Gebhard, taken when he was in the seventy-second year of his age, furnished by Dr. L. P. Gebhard, of Philadelphia.
8. Portrait of Mrs. Gebhard, in the sixty-seventh year of her age, furnished by Dr. L. P. Gebhard, of Philadelphia.
9. Portrait of Dominie Sluyter, furnished by his son, Stephen G. Sluyter.
10. Piano-forte, more than a hundred years old, used by Dominie Gebhard, presented by Mrs. Jeremiah M. Williams.

\* An Elder in the Reformed Dutch Church of South-Bend, Indiana.

11. Dominie Sluyter's study-chair, furnished by Tobias Esselystine.
12. Rocking-chair from Dominie Sluyter's study, furnished by Mrs. Franklin Miller.
13. Old books from Dominie Gebhard's library: 1. John Sleidanus's History of the Times of Charles V., printed in 1557; 2. Psalms of David in German, with picture of Heidelberg, published in 1749; 3. Latin Bible, 1703; 4. Dutch book, 1720—furnished by Charles W. Gebhard, of Hudson.
14. Old books from Dominie Sluyter's Library, furnished by Mrs. Dickie: 1. Commentary on St. Matthew, 1640; 2. Dutch New Testament, 1709; Dutch Dictionary, originally in the library of Dominie Lydius, one of the earliest Dutch ministers of Albany.
15. Old tobacco-box, formerly used by Dominie Gebhard and by him presented to Dominie Sluyter, furnished by Mr. Dickie.
16. Painting representing the old parsonage and the church before it had received any external alterations; likewise the Washington Seminary. The sketch was first taken in India-ink, by Lewis P. Gebhard, (now in his seventy-seventh year,) when about eighteen years of age, from which, about forty years ago, he had an enlarged painting taken. The original hangs in his parlor at Philadelphia, and this copy was furnished by his son-in-law, Mr. G. W. Reed, of Brooklyn.
17. Portrait of Anthony Ten Brook, furnished by Mrs. Christina Ten Brook, of Watervliet.
18. Portrait of Nathaniel Rowley, furnished by John Rowley, Esq.
19. Cravat-buckle and pair of home-knit gloves worn at a wedding in this community 100 years ago, furnished by Jeremiah M. Race.
20. Two family chairs, 120 years old, furnished by Alexander Van Rensselaer.
21. Horn tinder-box, carried through the Revolutionary War by Adam Ten Brook, now in possession of his widow.
22. Ancient sword and cartridge-box, furnished by Teunis Snyder.
23. Old picture of Christ's Trial, furnished by Teunis Snyder.
24. Pair of old pitchers, furnished by Mrs. Snyder.
25. Specimens of chirography, by Andrew Mayfield Crashore, Principal of "Washington Seminary" for twenty-five years.

Special seats near the pulpit were reserved for the Clergy, and also for the aged members of the church and community. These venerable persons, of whom more than a score had passed their eightieth year, constituted the most precious relics of the past, and added greatly by their presence to the interest of the occasion.

At a few minutes past ten the services of the morning were opened by an appropriate voluntary by the choir. This was followed by an invocation and salutation from the venerable Dr. Wyckoff, who fitly represented the old mother church of Albany.

The Forty-eighth and the One Hundred and Thirty-second Psalms were read by the Rev. C. Van Cleef, D.D., of Poughkeepsie.



The Ninetieth Psalm, second part, was then sung, after which an historical address was delivered by the Pastor, Rev. F. N. Zabriskie, containing an account of the internal history of the church.

After singing a few verses of the One Hundred and Thirty-seventh Psalm, part third, by the congregation, Rev. E. S. Porter, D.D., delivered an historical address illustrative of the history of the town of Claverack contemporaneous with the history of the church.

The morning service was concluded with prayer by Rev. Edwin Holmes, and the singing of the following hymn, composed for the occasion by Rev. A. P. Van Gieson :

TUNE—*Old Hundred.*

Our fathers' God, whose mercies sure  
Unchanged from age to age endure,  
To thee from humble hearts we raise  
Our hymn of thankfulness and praise.

A hundred years thy mighty hand  
Hath made this temple fair to stand :  
A hundred years ! long closed the eyes  
That saw these sacred walls arise.

A hundred years thy saving word  
Hath here by sinful men been heard ;  
And songs of praise and voice of prayer  
Have hence ascended to thine ear.

A hundred years have souls oppressed  
Here sought and found the promised rest ;  
And on thy saints, with gladness filled,  
Thy grace like dew hath here distilled.

Our fathers' God ! be thou our God !  
Safe keep this house of thine abode !  
And may we through redeeming love  
Attain at last thine house above !

“ Praise God from whom all blessings flow ;  
Praise him, all creatures, here below ;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host ;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

The congregation were then invited to the grove, where the hospitable people of Claverack had spread a table so bountiful that the immense concourse of people had “ bread enough and to spare.” During the collation the Claverack Brass Band entertained the company with some fine selections of music.

An informal meeting was organized in the grove during the intermission for the purpose of hearing from some of the distinguished laymen present.



Hon. Henry Hogeboom, Justice of the Supreme Court, was called to the Chair. Addresses were made by J. Southard Van Wyck, Esq., Hon. Theodore Miller, of the Supreme Court, Judge Newkirk, and John Gaul, Esq., of Hudson; Peter S. Danforth, Esq., of Schoharie; and Peter Van Buren, M.D., of New-York.

At about half-past three P.M. the services recommenced in the church. The choir furnished another voluntary, after which Rev. Ira C. Boice and Rev. A. P. Van Gieson, former pastors of the church, delivered addresses.

The following hymn, composed for the occasion by Mrs. R. W. Frost, was then sung:

# CENTENNIAL HYMN.

TUNE—*Uxbridge*.

These walls, from dust of distant lands,  
The past and passing time endears;  
The work of long-forgotten hands,  
Blest and revered a hundred years.

Small change to them a nation's change!  
The babes, the brides, the sable biers  
Within their portals—missal strange,  
Of life so writ in hundred years!

Saved from the whirlwind, lightning's dart,  
From fire and flood, its spire uprears;  
To God's high service set apart,  
A temple of a hundred years.

Here rest our dead, whose chorals sweet  
In long-gone Sabbaths wake our tears;  
We listen for their coming feet  
To celebrate these hundred years.

Before Jehovah, slight and weak  
Best homage that we pay appears;  
His bliss eternal let us seek,  
And life beyond Time's hundred years.

Thanks for the dead who died in Thee!  
Thanks that our day thy promise cheers!  
And praise, O Lord! that we may see  
Thy glory crown these hundred years!

Brief addresses were then delivered by representatives of the churches which in whole or in part have sprung out of the Claverack church, to wit: Rev. J. B. Drury, of the church of Ghent; Rev. J. S. Himrod, of the church of Greenpoint; Rev. E. N. Sebring, of the second church of Ghent; Rev. A. J. Sebring, of the second church of Claverack; Rev. John McC. Holmes, of the church of Hudson.

Prayer was offered by Rev. William Lyall, and the following hymn, composed for the occasion by Rev. F. N. Zabriskie, was sung by the congregation :

TUNE—*Brattle Street.*

We meet not as our fathers met,  
To consecrate these walls ;  
Their voice across the century  
To higher duty calls.  
We meet to consecrate ourselves  
To their good work begun ;  
Oh ! may the mantle of their zeal  
Descend from sire to son !

And now beside our fathers' graves,  
And in their ancient house,  
We, children of the covenant,  
Renew our solemn vows  
To Christ our Lord and Saviour first—  
Then, Mother Church, to thee,  
Thy faith, thy worship, and thy work,  
Thy peace and purity.

Lord, when another hundred years  
Shall gather other throngs,  
And we are in our quiet graves,  
May their memorial songs  
Recall in glad and grateful strains  
Of pious minstrelsy,  
That we were faithful in our day  
To thy dear Church and thee.

May we as pilgrims dwell below,  
As victors meet above ;  
Guide thou the pastor, feed the flock,  
And seal to all thy love.  
And may the Father and the Son,  
And Spirit be adored,  
Where there are works to make him known,  
Or saints to love the Lord.

The benediction was pronounced by Rev. Mr. Boice, after which the great congregation separated upon their various ways, thanking God and congratulating each other on the enjoyment and success of the occasion.

In the meeting convened in the grove during the intermission, it was, on motion of J. S. Van Wyck, Esq., resolved that a full report of the day's proceedings be published, and that a committee be appointed to take charge of the publication. Rev. E. S. Porter, D.D., Rev. F. N. Zabriskie, J. S. Van Wyck, Esq., Mr. Peter Hoffman, and Mr. Milton Martin were appointed such committee. The publication was afterward committed to the first two named members of the committee.

# A HISTORY

## OF THE

### REFORMED P. D. CHURCH OF CLAVERACK.

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It is with great diffidence and reluctance that I accept the position which my official relations to this church and the general expectation have thrust upon me. My residence among you has been so brief that it seems to me akin to presumption to stand up among the venerable and life-long residents of Claverack to instruct them in their own antiquities. The materials, also, for a history of the internal affairs of our church (from the scantiness of its earlier records) are too meagre to afford much hope of investing the account with that minute and lifelike interest necessary to engross present attention, or secure a lasting hold upon the memory.

In fact, all the speakers upon this occasion may well feel embarrassed in the presence of an orator more eloquent than they. This ancient house tells its own story with an impressiveness which speech may not hope to rival. Step around to the west side, and you will discern in antique figures, woven into the bricks, the date of its erection. The very "stones out of the wall" cry out in triumphant memory. And are not all these walls saturated with the past? There are sermons in these stones not only, but psalms and prayers, and holy aspirations, and penitent sighs, and heart experiences. The Ten Commandments ought, by this time, to be engraven upon these walls as on the two Tables of stone. There seems a sacred and suggestive hush around and within an old edifice like this, very different from the atmosphere which pervades a new building, however deftly it may imitate the antique architecture and effects. As we stand here to-day, who so unimaginative as not to feel this? The vision of a hundred, yes, of a hundred and fifty years passes in panorama before us. The early pastors seem to raise the marble doors of their tombs in yonder cemetery, and look about for the antiquated pulpit from which they preached down upon their people. The throngs of former worshipers in their quaint attire come winding over the hills and valleys, in their plain and springless but capacious wagons, to occupy the high, straight-backed pews. The women, in summer, with their mob-caps and white muslin neckerchiefs modestly folded

over their breasts, or, in winter, with their stuffed cloaks and ponderous bonnets, and foot-stoves replenished at the parsonage fire; and the men with their suits of homespun, their broad hats and knee-breeches, and ruffled shirts, and buckles on throat and shoon; and the goodly array of children, all baptized and all brought to church, and young and old alike speaking in a foreign tongue which would be utterly unintelligible to nine out of ten of us to-day.

And now the tinkling bell has ceased its clatter in the little, old belfry, the neighborly gossip around the doors is over, and the congregation is seated decently and in order, the Elders and Deacons at the right and left of the pulpit, the Van Rensselaer of the day in his elevated and canopied pew among his army of lease-holders. The men are ranged around the walls, and the women in orderly rows in the centre. Above their heads is a wooden ceiling with prodigious rafters. The walls are plastered and meant to be white; the wood-work is painted blue; if galleries have yet been introduced, they tower even further above the people than the present ones; the pews differ in shape and size almost as much as their occupants. If prior to 1780, the worshipers depend solely upon salt pork and foot-stoves to save them from freezing. If as late as 1800, a ten-plated box-stove, which scarcely serves to do more than make the cold more appreciable, stands raised on long legs upon a platform in the very centre of the building, with pipe going out of the window. The pulpit stands at the north end, is painted blue, as if to indicate its celestial origin, shaped like a wine-glass, and surmounted by a sounding-board on which "Holiness to the Lord" is appropriately inscribed. At the further end of the church is a great window, which would look out into the tower, were it not for the red curtain by which it is covered.

There is as yet no occupant of the pulpit, but underneath sits the voorleser, (we will suppose William Van Ness, who held the office for thirty-three years, or Stephen Fonda, or William Ten Broeck, or, at a still later date, Robert Van Deusen, father of our present beloved Elder of that name.) He begins the service by reading the Scriptures, including the Commandments. Then he gives out a psalm, and, in old-fashioned though not unpleasing style of simple music, leads the tune for his choir, (who are, as it should be, the whole congregation.) All this is in Dutch, of course, and, if the period be not more than sixty or seventy years ago, promotes the amusement quite as much as the edification of the "Young America" of that day, as they sit hidden away in their high-walled pews. During the singing the Dominie enters. We will suppose it to be Dominie Gebhard in his prime. Rather below the medium height and correspondingly slim, with nimble step he advances up the aisles, bowing to right and left after the old German custom, and pausing a moment at the bottom step of the pulpit to reverently hold his hat before his eyes and offer prayer. As he rises to conduct the service, we catch a sight of his mild and cheerful face and small but bright eye, white cravat and "baffy;" and soon, with a clear voice and animated gesticulation, he begins his sound and pious discourse,

in the Low Dutch or the German, as the case may be. Though not lengthy for the period, our modern taste would doubtless cut it down to one half its duration.

Every Sabbath is a baptismal day; and yet, behold the long line of parents and sponsors bringing their children to the Lord! One, two, six, twelve! and next Sabbath shall, perhaps, witness as many more infants sealed to Christ. It was no uncommon thing for the Baptismal Record to be increased by the addition of over one hundred names in the course of a year. An instance is related by Rev. Dr. Currie, where thirty-six children were baptized at one service in the Church of Taghkanic by Dominie Gebhard. These, with the parents and godparents, must have made a company of at least one hundred.

And now the Deacons step forth with their money-bags, suspended to long poles, and furnished with little jingling bells that make a suggestive sound as they pass from pew to pew. Or, it is Communion Sunday. Rank after rank of communicants are summoned from their seats, and in turn surround the table, where the elements are distributed to each by the hand of the Dominie himself. Nor is it necessarily the Sabbath. Christmas, New-Year's day, Good Friday, Easter, and Whitsunday are feast days by appointment and usage. Or, it is catechetical exercise. There are no Sabbath-schools yet. Robert Raikes had not gathered his little vagrant neighbors about him till this building was fourteen years old. The Dominie is all the Sunday-school the children know, as they sit in awestruck lines before him, and lisp in Dutch the long and intricate answers of the Heidelberg Catechism. He is superintendent, teacher, library, singing-book, and child's paper to them, and, I am afraid, picnic and Christmas-tree also.

Such are some of the scenes which pass before us in solemn and tender recollection, as we sit here to-day amid scenes so like and yet so changed. The same blue heaven above us, the same walls about us, the same trees overshadowing us, the same mountains reposing in the distance, the same church with its doctrine and worship, the same families occupying these seats, bearing the same time-honored names of Van Rensselaer, Van Deusen, Miller, Esselstyne, Ten Brook, Delamater, Philip, Leggett, Dederick, Livingston, Smith, Schumacher, Sharp, Snyder, Sagendorf, Mesick, Ostrander, Race, Myers, Rossman, Holsapple, Poucher, Groat, Fonda, Emerick, Link, Melius, Skinkle, Root, Clapper, Vandebroe, Hess, Ham, Hoffman, Heermance, Williams, Rowley, Cole, Martin, Best, Brown, Coventry, Kilmer, Stickles, Gardiner, Bennet, Niver, Storm, Jordan, Pitcher, Lasher, Milham, Dickie, and more than I can now take time to mention. And yet the men are changed in person, speech, garb, and largely in their ideas and spirit, (whether for the better or the worse we shall not undertake to say;) the house itself enlarged, remodeled, and adorned; the apostolic succession of Dutch pastors still maintained, but a voice in the pulpit to which the language of the "Faderland" were a strange speech. The old red-brick parsonage, with its gambrel roof, which used to stand behind the pear-tree in the garden, has given way to yonder embowered residence;



the landscape, with its cleared fields, and new roads, and modern houses, and colossal Institute, and swift and thundering railway trains, and telegraphic wires, scarcely recognizable. How fast the world has lived, and how greatly changed, even in this quiet hamlet, since our fathers stood upon this ridge one hundred years ago and gave this church to God! Then there was no American nation. Now, what name so proud and mighty as that which we of these United States have monopolized? Every species of war has since taken us under its stern schooling—the defensive struggle of the Revolution, the invasion and conquest of Mexico, the naval triumphs of 1812, and, above all, the death-grapple of democracy and government with despotism and lawlessness, whose earthquake-throes have not yet entirely ceased. Methodism was but twenty-five years old. Universalism was not yet known as a church organization. Then there were no foreign missions to the heathen, no steamers on the river or the sea, no railroads on the land. This Church, not having adopted its new name, Dutch, was only known as the Reformed Church of Claverack. The denomination was boiling with excitement over the question whether it should become a national church or a mere dependency of Holland, fighting the first of its three great battles (the last is to be decided this fall) between the American and the foreign idea. Claverack village, though not half its present size, was a great place then. Hudson was only Claverack Landing. The stage-coaches between Albany and New-York passed through the village and by the church, waking up the little hamlet to periodical and intense excitement by their blowing horns and cracking whips and prancing steeds and their budget of world-gossip. Our shelves are filled with books; our mail comes to us thrice a day; we are deluged with daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals; the school-houses can almost hear each other's hum. Men "run to and fro" with a speed the very thought of which would have frightened our ancestors, and send their messages faster than the earth turns round, and knowledge is increased. We have grown to be cosmopolites in thought and knowledge and travel, and, most of all, in our sympathy and recognition. And, much as I revere the past, I will not admit that the men of this generation have not greatly advanced both in their standard and attainment in Christian life and work.

A church in the days of its building is an embodied vow. In its subsequent use and history, it is an altar. In the lapse of time, it comes to be a monument. It is in this last character that our dear old Claverack Church has drawn us together to-day. Not in the spirit of that November day of 1767, when Dominie Fryenmoet dedicated it to the service of Almighty God; nor yet as this people have been wont to assemble on any of the subsequent five thousand two hundred Sabbaths. We are met to express our respect for antiquity, our reverence for our ancestors, our love for the church, our adoration and gratitude to God. I am well aware that our church can hardly claim the honors of age beside some of the cathedrals and minsters of Europe, which trace their pedigree back to the twelfth or thirteenth century. But in our new country one hundred years of time constitute as

veritable an antiquity as three hundred years of Europe or "a cycle of Cathay." It is meet, therefore, that we seek food and stimulus for these sentiments by a review of our church's internal history, (our friend and fellow-citizen, Dr. Porter, will furnish us with what may be called its external or contemporaneous history.)

The history of a church, like that of a nation, is no mere collection of annals, strung together in chronological order. It is a growth, as much so as a stalk of corn. For "so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and the seed should spring and grow up, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Tracing the history of the Claverack Church from the handful of corn on the top of this rock throughout its successive stages of development, we shall divide our narrative into fifteen successive eras.

## I. PRIMITIVE PERIOD.

The first of these is almost lost in the shadows of an unrecorded antiquity. It is the Embryotic Era. It extends from the settlement of the county to the year 1816. The inhabitants of the region included in the present towns of Claverack, Hudson, Hillsdale, together with parts of Ghent, Stockport, and Greenport, from which the Claverack congregation was afterward drawn, comprised in the year 1816 less than two hundred and fifty souls, male and female, old and young, bond and free. Accordingly the country must have been comparatively a wilderness, having all the features of a new and uncleared region. But the old Holland settlers who comprised the bulk of the inhabitants, like their brethren of the entire immigration, had two peculiarities indicative of their substantial qualities. They always found out the most eligible and fertile districts, and they always carried the ark of God with them. The first of these will sufficiently account for their selection of the "clover reach" for their home; and the second would make it sure, even if we had no facts to substantiate it, that they did not remain long without the ordinances of the Reformed religion. The Albany Dominie visited them from time to time, to administer the sacraments and preach the word. In fact, Claverack, Kinderhook, Livingston Manor, and probably East-Camp (or Germantown) were preaching stations of the pastor of the Reformed Church of Albany. With our modern notions of the pastorate, we stand aghast at such a charge—a flock, too, in the wilderness! How beautiful upon the mountains were the feet of him that brought the glad tidings in those days to the lonely pioneers of Rensselaerwyck!

## II. ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

Thus the flame of a religious life was kept bright among these little settlements of the Hudson, till by and by, in the ministry of Dominie Petrus Van Driessen, they began to form themselves into independent churches. Among the first of these to organize were the Holland settlers and their

Palatinate neighbors in Claverack. They, of course, constituted themselves into a Reformed Church, (though doubtless many Lutherans at that early day, before they had established churches of their own, worshiped with them,) for the exercise of their religion according to the doctrines and usages of the Reformed Churches in Holland and Germany. For ten years, however, their condition seems to have been but little changed by this act, as they were still dependent upon the Albany ministers; and, although mention is made of an "acting consistory," their acts appear to have been but few, at least were not recorded in any book which has come down to us. In fact, this organization must have been quite an informal one, since the statement appears upon our record that "the Reformed Church of Claverack was organized in 1726-7."

### III. BUILDING OF A CHURCH.

But all this time the little church was gaining strength by increase of numbers and wealth, and, we trust, by growth in grace, and in the year 1726 they made a successful effort to erect a church building. The building committee consisted of three familiar names, Samuel Ten Broeck, Cornelius Martense Isselsteen, and Jeremias Muller. And the people made a curious covenant at the time, actually binding themselves to the church for the accomplishment of the undertaking instead of subscribing a specific amount. The building committee were empowered to determine what each one should give in work or money, and they "bound themselves to fulfill the agreement under penalty of three pounds current money of the Province of New-York." The names of those who made this compact, as they are the first upon the records of the church, are worthy of special mention. They are, besides the building committee, as follows: \* Henderick Van Renssalaer, Isaack Van Duse, Willem Isselsteen, Stiffanis Muller, Kasparis Conyn, Gloudie D. lamatere, Isaack D. lamatere, Harpert V: Duse, Arent Van Der kar, Jacob Isselsteen, Richard Moor, Jacob Essewyn, Robbert Van Duse, Joris Decker, Killeiën Muller, Cornelis Muller, Junjor, Matthewis Is: V: Duse, Isaack Isselstyn, Kasper Van Hoese, Matthewis V: Duse, Jan Bont, Isaack V: Arerim, Henderick Bont, Kristoffel Muller, Tobyas Van Duse, Bartholomewis Hoogeboom, Jurie Adam Smit.

The building was erected near the spot where the Court-House was afterward built. To be more exact, it stood on what is now the road between Peter Best's and Peter Hoffman's, and partly upon the lot containing the tenement-house of the latter. There were just twenty-six pews in it, six of them being long pews ranged all around the walls and occupied by the men, and the twenty others, mostly facing the pulpit, occupied by the women. Each male and each female member of the congregation had his own appointed seat, allotted to him by a committee, consisting, besides the building committee, of Isaac Van Deusen and Stiffanis Muller. So primitive was this ancient edifice that the pulpit was reached by a ladder! On

\* These names are given in the exact spelling of the Record. ]



the 7th of February, 1727, the church was dedicated by Dominie Van Driessen, of Albany. From this date commence the Baptismal and other records of the church. Among these is the first record of an

#### IV. ELECTION OF CONSISTORY.

June 18, 1727, they were, Elders, { CORNELIS MARTENSE ISSELSTEIN,\*  
ROBERT VAN DEURSEN,  
JEREMIAS MULLER.

Deacons, { CASPARIS VAN HOUSEN,  
SAMUEL TEN BROECK,  
ISAACK VAN DEMSEN.

These were ordained on the first of August following. On the twenty fifth of November we find the following covenant made with the Consistory, and signed by what appears to be the entire membership. The Elders and Deacons are to be promoters of God's Word and exhort the people to true liberality. If any controversy shall arise between the Consistory and congregation relating to a misunderstanding of God's Word, and they shall be accused of false doctrine, both parties shall be bound to refer the case to the neighboring Reformed Church; and if the Consistory be found guilty and will not retract, the people shall have the privilege, in full assembly, to choose others in their place: "On these articles and conditions, we, as a Christian congregation, place ourselves under the authority of our Consistory, with promises always to walk as free Christians should do, and promising always to be faithful to our agreements as far as in us lies, and we hereby certify that this has been done with the consent of the whole congregation."

#### V. FIRST PASTOR.

Meanwhile their first Pastor had been called and settled. This was Johannes Van Driessen, a younger brother of the Albany Dominie, Petrus Van Driessen, who seems to have been a kind of godfather to this church. He was at the time thirty years of age, and this was his first settlement. He was born and educated in the old country, but emigrated to America without having been ordained. Taking a letter of Patroon Van Rensselaer to the Faculty of Yale College, he was licensed and ordained by a Congregational council. He was called to Claverack on the first of August, 1727.

It is a strange fact that the Church in America had been warned against him by the Classis of Amsterdam before he arrived. If they saw fit to receive him under those circumstances, they need not have been surprised at subsequent developments. Dominie Van Driessen had the joint charge of Kinderhook, Claverack, and Livingston Manor. But the former charge received by stipulation two thirds of his service, and probably his residence was at Kinderhook.

\* These names are given in the exact spelling of the Record.

He seems to have commenced his labors at once. They were, however, of short duration, certainly not over a year. After this time he devoted himself exclusively to Kinderhook, where he remained eight years in all. We afterward hear of him at Fishkill, Poughkeepsie, at the Paltz, and at Acquackanonk. In all these places he seems to have had trouble, and his last days were spent in disgrace and under the ban of the Cœtus, whose minutes in 1750 speak of his "extraordinary conduct" up to that day, accuse him of "falsehood and deception," and refuse to recognize him as a "lawful" minister of our Church. What his failings were, and whether personal or mainly ecclesiastical, and whether or not largely growing out of his Congregational ordination, I have not cared very much to investigate. It were best for the children to go backward and throw a mantle over the errors of the fathers. It is due to Dominie Van Driessen to say that he was apparently favorable to the Conferentie party, and that neither Cœtus nor Conferentie in those days was in the best mood to view the conduct of the opposite party with perfect charity or fairness. It is probable that the poor man died about this time. I deem it my duty not to conceal these facts, in order that I may give a fair illustration of a truth which we are apt to lose sight of, namely, that the moral and religious standard and tone of those early days was not so high as it has since become among clergy or people. Perhaps this is scarcely to be wondered at when we remember the state of discipline at that time, arising from the fact that no minister could be tried, and the case of no church-member could be finally adjudicated, without being referred to the old country.

## VI. CÆTUS AND CONFERENTIE CONTROVERSY.

It may be worth while at this place to say a word about the Cœtus and Conferentie controversy. This was the Guelph and Ghibelline war of our Church. It was the second of those great intestine battles between the American and foreign ideas which have agitated our Church. It raged for more than fifteen years with astonishing fierceness, resulting in disgraceful feuds between neighboring churches and ministers, sad divisions in congregations, tumults on the Lord's day, assaults upon ministers in their pulpits, the locking of church-doors by one party upon another, and kindred proceedings, which show that our ancestors did not monopolize all Christian spirit or goodness, after all. It was simply a quarrel, as most public quarrels and questions are, between the party of progress and the conservatives. The former had constituted themselves into a Cœtus, or Ecclesiastical Assembly, which they proposed to make independent of the Church in Holland, so that they might ordain their own ministry and transact their own business. The older, and slower, and less American party could not bear the thought of cutting loose from the Mother Church, and called it schism. They formed themselves into a body called the Conferentie, partly to hold the kind of intercourse with Holland which they preferred, and partly to fight the Cœtus more effectually. The matter seems clear enough now, but

they were very equally divided then, and were only reconciled by the mission to Holland of Dr. John H. Livingston, a great-grandson of the original patentee of the Manor of Livingston in this county. His negotiations obtained the consent of the Mother Church itself to the separation, and through this the consent finally of the Conferentie.

During this struggle, Claverack was warmly in the interest of the conservative or Conferentie party, so much so that she made it a condition in her calls that the minister should have nothing to do with the Cœtus.

## VII. DARK AGES.

And now ensue what I would call the dark ages of the Church, from 1728 to 1756, no less than twenty-eight years. During all this time it was without a Pastor. This was doubtless due to the fact that the churches were supplied from Holland with all their ministers, and accordingly the supply had become very inadequate. Even in the year 1800, at least one third of the pulpits were vacant. It was very difficult, therefore, for a comparatively small and out-of-the-way church like Claverack to obtain any one at all. And they still further limited the field of their selection by refusing to call any of the party which comprised at least half the ministry, and those mostly the younger men. They were supplied during this interregnum, as they had been before John Van Driessen, by the pastors of surrounding churches. Dominie Reinhard Erickzon, of Schenectady, officiated more or less in the years 1730-32. Dominie Van Schie, of Albany, from that time with a slight exception till 1743. From that time they were served by various ministers, none of whom are known, except Dominie Van Hoevenberg, of Rhinebeck, a somewhat notorious man in his day, who was afterward deposed. Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that for six years, from 1750-6, no members were added to the church, and during the whole twenty-eight years not more than an average of two a year are recorded. The ways of Zion languished, and few came up to her solemn feasts.

## VIII. PASTORATE OF FRYENMOET.

But in the year 1756 the scene is changed by the installation of a new Pastor, Rev. Johannis Casparus Fryenmoet or Frymuth. He was born in Switzerland, (the latter spelling of his name being probably Swiss,) and was probably educated there in part. He emigrated, while a young man, to America, and took up his residence at Minisink, in Orange county, (now Port Jervis.) Here the people of the associated churches of Mahackamack, Minisink, Walpack, and Smithfield took a special interest in him, sending him over to Holland to complete his education and receive ordination. On returning, he accepted a call over these churches. An Indian massacre in that region made him a fugitive. "Fleeing before the public enemy, he came to North-Branch, and was several times asked by the Consistory there to officiate, which he did with so much acceptance that many mem-

bers of the four united congregations requested that he might preach in all the churches; but the Consistory in the other three villages refused, no doubt because of their engagements to a certain Hardenberg, who had married the widow of Dominie Frelinghuysen. The adherents of Dominie Fryenmoet, being by far the greater number in the four congregations, bestirred themselves to obtain a subscription to have him called for their lawful minister; but the Consistory opposed this with all their might, and the dispute rose so high that each party called in the Circle to settle it. The proceedings of the Circle were so manifold, withal not obscurely showing partisanship, that we can not relate them. But we must mention one thing, namely, that the adherents of Dominie Fryenmoet promised to raise the whole salary for him, and offered further, if the others would call any lawful minister whom they preferred, (seeing the congregations required two,) that they would assist in paying him; still they could not agree, and Dominie Fryenmoet had to go away." (From Proceedings of Conferentie. See Minutes of Synod, vol. i. page ciii.)

Coming then to Claverack, he met with a much more satisfactory and unanimous reception, probably all the more so because of his well-known devotion to the Conferentie party. He was an original opponent of the formation of a *Cœtus* in 1747, and for three years refused to become a member of even that purely dependent and informal body, which probably accounts for the question which arose in the said *Cœtus*, in 1748, concerning "the manner of his ordination," (out of which nothing ever grew, however.) In 1750 he finally gave in his adhesion, but withdrew in vehement protest in 1755, and was one of those who formed the Conferentie, and was always present at the meetings of that body. This was just at the time of his coming here, the boiling-point of the ecclesiastical war. He had a curious way of always adding his age to the signature of his name. In 1757 he adds "æt. 36," which would make him thirty-five years old at the time of his settlement here. That event occurred on the third of October, 1756. The text from which he preached on that occasion was from Psalm 34: 12: "What man is he that desireth life and loveth many days, that he may see good?" (Whether his advice upon that occasion for the attainment of longevity had aught to do in producing the fact that Dr. Porter has found no less than thirty members of this congregation above eighty years of age, I will not, of course, express an opinion.)

His call, like Van Driessen's, was a joint one from Claverack, Kinderhook, and Livingston Manor. "It stipulated to pay him, first, the sum of forty pounds each, or about \$300 in all; second, to provide him with a dwelling-house 'becoming a preacher,' with a kitchen, stable, etc., together with several acres of land for a 'garden, pasture, mow-ground, orchard,' etc., which should be situated in Claverack, the congregation of Claverack to provide these things for the privilege of having the preacher dwelling among them; the other congregations to provide the preacher with 'entertainment becoming his office' while laboring among them. Third, the three congregations to bear his expenses of moving,



each one an equal share. Dominie Fryenmoet took three months to consider this call, and finally accepted it." His ministry in Claverack lasted until 1770, when he withdrew, henceforth to confine himself to Kinderhook and Schodack for the remainder of his life. He died about 1778, nearly sixty years of age. He was interred under the Kinderhook church, and some of his descendants, the Van Burens and the Kittles, are or have been till recently residents of that vicinity. He appears to have particularly figured in the councils of the denomination, entering with spirit into all their discussions. He must have been a man of tact and diplomatic skill, from the fact of his frequent selection on commissions to deal with the most delicate cases of discipline and difficulties among the churches. We instance particularly his conduct in the troubles at New-Paltz, arising out of the connection of John Van Driessen with that church, for which he received the special thanks of the Cœtus; also, in the case of Van Hoesenberg's discipline, which he carried through amidst great personal abuse; and, finally, the dismissal of Dr. Harmanus Meier from Kingston, because the latter was not sound on the Conferentie question. He was honored by a unanimous election as President of the Cœtus in the year 1752. The last synod in which his name appears was in 1773. He was the "oldest minister in years and services," north of Kingston, in 1772. He, in common with most of his parishioners, was the owner of slaves, and seems to have fully believed in the patriarchal character and privileges of the institution. His personal appearance, style of preaching or characteristics we have been unable to supply from record or tradition, even among his descendants, except the single fact that he was remarkably social and genial in personal intercourse. We may fairly infer that he was a man of great energy and spirit, and served his churches with fidelity and acceptance. He had many seals to his ministry in Claverack, having received during the time of his connection with the church the large number of two hundred and forty-four into its membership, of which number about half must have been received on confession. The largest number in any one year was in 1769, just previous to his removal, when nearly thirty confessed their faith.

## IX. BUILDING OF THIS CHURCH.

During his ministry occurred the building of this church, the event which we to-day are commemorating. The Consistory were already in possession of a piece of land, three morgans in extent, bought in 1759 of Cornelis and Jeremias Miller for the sum of twelve pounds. This comprised, doubtless, the most of the parsonage glebe. They now received, on the thirteenth of February, 1767, a deed for the church grounds (and, we take it for granted, those on which the *new* parsonage stands) from John Van Rensselaer, of the Manor of Rensselaerwyck, "for the building and erecting a Reformed Protestant church according to the Articles of the Synod of Dordrecht." The lease of this latter parcel of land had been purchased

on the preceding sixth of December, 1766, of Hendrick Ten Broeck for one hundred pounds, by Hendrick Van Rensselaer, Jeremiah Ten Broeck, Jacob Philip, Robert Van Rensselaer, Casparus Conyne, Sr., Jacob Harter, Johannis Muller, John Legghart, William Van Ness, Jacobus Philip, and Johannis Haltsappel, for the purpose of a church building. The release of this and of the former parcel of three morgans was the act of Col. John Van Rensselaer. The choice of a site for their church gives high testimony to the taste of the Building Committee, Messrs. Hendrick Van Rensselaer; Jacob Philip, and Jeremiah Ten Broeck; yet how often is it that what all posterity will applaud can only be carried through against strenuous opposition! The change of location excited so much disgust among those who never like to see any change, and those who deemed themselves incommoded by it, that some never forgave it, and are not known to have ever entered the new church door. Particularly was the feeling inflamed against Mr. Van Rensselaer, whose elevated and canopied pew thenceforth became so obnoxious to one of his humbler neighbors that she uttered the iconoclastic threat of taking an ax to church and hewing it down. A still more disgraceful tradition has been handed down of personal violence inflicted upon Mr. Van Rensselaer by a leading member of one of the other great families of this region. The building long went by the name of the Van Rensselaer church. The church was dedicated on the 8th of November, 1767, by Dominie Fryenmoet, with the simple ceremony of preaching a sermon. The text was Jer. 7 : 2: "Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord." Two children were baptized on that occasion, namely, Kommertje, whose parents were Johannes Muller and Fytje Halenbeck; also Johannes, son of Coenrad Mauer and Jeertje Smidt. It was not as long as the present building by some thirty feet, and had not the front tower nor the wings. There was simply a quaint little belfry on the front part of the roof, the appearance of which may be gathered from the picture before you. There has been a question whether the bricks were brought from Holland. I think there can be little or no doubt of it. It is a tradition current in the Van Rensselaer family that they were imported by Patroon Hendrick, who took a special pride in having Holland bricks for his church; and one of them informs me that his parents, whose memories must have gone back to within ten or fifteen years of the time, often spoke positively of the bricks as imported. Mrs. Jacob Whitbeck, during her lifetime one of our best antiquarian authorities, was also wont to assert the same, and to relate that the bricks were first taken to Albany, and thence brought down by sloop to Claverack. The interior we have already described, except that there was at that early day, of course, no such thing as a stove. Whether the first of the three bells which have called the people together was put in at this time we can not say. It was a bell of exceedingly modest pretensions, ranging somewhere between the cow-bell and the steamboat-bell. The second rose to the full dignity of the steamboat-bell. The first stick







of timber toward the erection of this edifice was brought by Joris Decker, residing in what is now the town of Greenport, on the place now occupied by Mr. John Kipp. His grandchildren are still among us, and vouch for this statement. I deem it appropriate that he who was foremost in the work which we celebrate to-day should have a foremost mention on this occasion.

The old graveyard was set apart at about the same time. The new part only dates from 1861.

## X. HILLSDALE OR KRUM CHURCH.

In the year 1769, the church passed through the worst quarrel in its history—a history singularly devoid of dissensions. This arose from the building of the Hillsdale or Krum church, (an organization and building not now in existence.) The precise nature of this division we have not ascertained, nor do we care to investigate. Suffice it to say, that the matter was carried up to the General Synod in 1773, and considered from year to year without result, until the Revolutionary war cut off communication between the Northern and Southern portions of the denomination. The Church probably reaped now the fruits of their obstinate independency. When they needed help and interference from Synod, they could not get it. This division apparently cost them the loss of their minister and a vacancy of their pulpit for six years. The only record that we have found upon this matter on the books of the church is a resolution of Consistory, dated April 9th, 1770, to the effect that they would call for a minister for Claverack, and that those who “lived to the east” should have his services according to the amount of money raised by them. This Hillsdale church was for many years not only independent but a joint congregation of Reformed and Lutherans. Its title was singularly enough, “The Reformed Lutheran Unity Church.” It afterward became wholly Reformed.

## XI. INTERVAL.

And now ensued another interval in the pastoral line. For six years the church was dependent upon other ministers for occasional services, chiefly Dominie Gerhard Daniel Cock of Germantown. The celebrated Dr. Livingston, flying from New-York on its occupation by the British to Livingston Manor, probably officiated occasionally about this time.

## XII. PASTORATE OF GEBHARD.

There was another refugee from New-York at the same time, by the name of John Gabriel Gebhard, a young minister about twenty-six years of age, who had been pastor of a German Reformed church in that city. Providence seemed to have sent him, and he was heartily welcomed by the Claverack church. On flying from New-York he went to Kingston, where he received no less than three calls from vacant churches, but concluded

to accept the call to Claverack. He commenced his labors about the fourth of July, 1776—the Fourth. He had been in this country about five years, having been settled in Pennsylvania for three years previous to removing to New-York. He was a German by birth. He received his earlier university education at Heidelberg, surely a most appropriate source for one of our ministers to emanate from. He completed his studies in theology at Utrecht, and was licensed by the Reformed Church of Holland. He was a learned and accurate scholar. This, added to his excellent native abilities, his pleasing manner of speaking, and his great good sense, made him a very acceptable preacher; out of the pulpit he was truly a gentleman of the old school, social and vivacious, but always dignified and courteous. He was an affectionate and beloved pastor. But there was probably no quality for which he was more distinguished than his personal amiability and his love of peace. In his relations with his colleague and his people, whom he found in a distracted state on account of the building of the new church, but whom he labored successfully to harmonize, there does not seem to have been the least jar or discord, and I doubt not that the settled character which this congregation has maintained for peace and harmony to this very day is largely due to his influence and example.

His habits from a child were studious. When only five years old, he had “read the Bible through.” His father, who was a clergyman pious and beloved, died when John Gabriel was twelve years old, and this, together with other afflictions, was blessed at that early age to his conversion.

He shared, as it behoved him to do, the proverbial thrift of the German race. His salary was only £130 a year, and never reached more than \$400 with the parsonage. Still he was enabled by prudent management, with the additional proceeds of a small patrimony, to give seven sons a classical and professional education, and prepare them for eminence in their respective professions, and at least two of them for distinguished honors in public life. He invested his money in a farm, just this side, I am told, of the residence of Mr. Jacob W. Miller, which he let out upon shares. He at one time owned a mill for the manufacture of linseed oil. Subsequently he cultivated the castor-oil plant, and obtained a patent for making the cold-pressed oil. By these means, and the coöperation of a model wife, he eked out his salary and provided for his large family.

He was married on the 3d of June, 1773, to Mary Gerber or Carver, of Philadelphia, at that time only sixteen years old. This admirable woman was endowed with great energy and many accomplishments. So beloved and revered was she, that the whole congregation called her “ma.” She was of highly respectable parentage. From the time of her marriage, she shared largely the duties and responsibilities of her husband. She survived him only three years. Her portrait hangs beside his to-day.

Mr. Gebhard and his wife were both possessed of a cultivated musical taste, and it was a common and a very pleasant sight to see him playing upon the antique piano which is on exhibition to-day, while she sang from

the thick old book (eight hundred pages in size) of German chorals. The Dominie was quite a mechanical genius, and, besides his patent for an oil-press, is reported by his son to have made a piano with his own hands.

His facility in acquiring languages is shown by the following fact: He was only able to preach in the German tongue at the time of his settlement at Claverack. But, notwithstanding the large German element in his congregation, the Hollandish element was still greater, so that, to meet the expectation that he should preach in the Low Dutch, he undertook the mastery of that language, and in three months was able to preach his first sermon. In process of time the Low Dutch swallowed up the other so completely that we find it on record, in 1788, that he preached three sermons in that language to one in German and one in English.

Dominie Gebhard's field of labor was extensive enough to discourage any but a man of great nerve and industry. The region of country over which he was placed was of vast and almost indefinite extent, and is described as "a comparative wilderness, with here and there a small farmhouse." The roads were wretched for the most part, and, besides the fatigue of travel, there was no little danger, especially during the earlier part of his pastorate, which comprised the years of the Revolutionary war. This region was well supplied with troublesome Tories, so that the vigilance committee in Claverack had plenty of business on their hands. In going to and fro, Dominie Gebhard's liberty and even his life were sometimes in danger while passing the secret haunts of the enemy, especially in the vicinity of Taghkanic.

Besides his own immediate charge, he supplied the church of Squam-pawmuck (now Ghent) for about five years, going thither once in two months. From 1793 to 1814, once every seven weeks, he preached at the Krum church at Hillsdale. From 1777 to 1797 he supplied the church of Taghkanic four times a year. Upon the death of Rev. Mr. Clough, he assisted in supplying the German church at the Camp, and, at the request of Consistory, was instrumental in obtaining for them a pastor from Germany. He also used to travel a distance of sixty miles over rough and almost impassable roads to administer the ordinances and preach in the old stone church of Schoharie.

Dominie Gebhard took great interest in the cause of education, and it was through his efforts that the Washington Seminary was established in Claverack in 1777. This academy, which was the germ of the present Hudson River Institute, and which afforded the best English and classical education, had the honor of fitting for future usefulness a number of our most distinguished citizens. Besides the sons of Mr. Gebhard, several of the most eminent members of the Van Ness family; Joseph D. Monell Ambrose L. Jordan, Dr. William Bay of Albany, and others were educated in this excellent but unpretending school, whose homely building is accurately represented in the picture before you.

It was Dominie Gebhard's lot to see several generations of his parishioners, and in several instances he baptized the great-grandchildren of

those whom he had united in marriage. His labors were greatly blessed in the ingathering of members into the church, five hundred and fifty-four having been received in all. The most fruitful years appear to have been 1786 and 1808, in each of which twenty-nine confessed their faith.

Thus the good and well-beloved pastor labored on for nearly fifty years, when he was declared emeritus by the Classis, and in about fifteen months thereafter was declared emeritus by a higher authority, and released by gentle death from his earthly work. His sepulchre is among us, his descendants are many of them still around the old homestead, and his works survive him. It does us good to contemplate a life like this, so modest, so gentle, so useful, so honorable, and so prosperous, and going out in a ripe old age amid the scenes and results of a life-long labor.

Ten years before the close of Dominie Gebhard's ministry it began to be evident both to his people and himself, that his failing energies were insufficient for the care of this great charge. A new era had also been introduced with the rising generation. The people were becoming Americanized, and the English language was fast bringing all others into disuse, so that many of the young people but imperfectly understood the Dutch and German in which the old Dominie almost exclusively preached, and still more of them were beginning to feel restless at this retention of a foreign and nearly obsolete tongue. It was accordingly decided to call a colleague, who should take the burden of the work upon himself and should also preach in English. The choice of Dominie Gebhard and of the church alike fell upon a young man who had just graduated from the seminary at New-Brunswick, in the fourth class which had gone forth from that institution.

### XIII. PASTORATE OF SLUYTER.

Richard Sluyter was then twenty-seven years of age, in the full vigor of manhood, and possessed with an absorbing zeal for the salvation of men. Converted early in life, that life was one continuous and cheerful sacrifice to his Master's work. Endowed with talents, energy, and personal qualities which would have made him eminently successful in any secular pursuit and enabled him to accumulate for himself and family a far more adequate support and patrimony, he chose the self-denying work of the ministry with a full consciousness of the cost, and counted it all joy to be able to do so from the first until the last. His portraits, which are in possession of many of you, are said to give a good impression of his appearance in the prime of life. His frame was large and vigorous, at least six feet in height, his step quick, and his manner full of life and heartiness. His features were marked, and indicated character. His eyes were dark and keen, his hair, which was also dark but scanty, was drawn together on the top of his head, and hung in profusion at the back. Around his neck he wore a full white scarf. He was naturally attentive to his dress and personal appearance. There was something commanding









and martial in his gait and aspect, so that he would sometimes be taken for a military officer. Every thing about him indicated a robust nature, both physical and moral. His character was marked by untiring energy, hopefulness and courage, simplicity and generosity. This latter quality frequently led him to help others to his own detriment, and his confiding unsuspiciousness was sometimes taken advantage of by impostors. I have a begging letter in my possession which was sent to him by some one who had the audacity to represent himself as a brother of Dr. Livingston, and I am told that Mr. Sluyter could hardly be restrained from sending money, even though assured that no such person existed. He was the life of home and the social circle. His family government was a fine combination of firmness and familiarity. He even took the pains to prepare written rules for their guidance. He was exuberantly hospitable, and during revival meetings at the church would convert his house into a sort of free hotel, for the lodging and provisioning of those who came from a distance.

His characteristics and tastes eminently qualified him for pastoral work. The same courteous gentleman with all classes; without partiality; entering the abodes of his people without the least ceremony, and making old and young, rich and poor, feel at home in his presence; apt in speech, and sympathetic amid sickness or sorrow; faithful to bring the Gospel to bear individually upon all his parishioners, he was the model of a pastor. He could say, near the close of his life, "I have never feared the face of man in the discharge of duty." No less distinguished a servant of God than David Abeel traced his first religious impressions to Mr. Sluyter's personal influence. And here was the secret of his strength and success. When he entered upon his work, he cast a keen and thoughtful glance over the field. He saw an immense district of country more than fifteen miles square, and comprising over five hundred families. According to the testimony of a young member of the church who afterward entered the ministry, the moral and religious aspect of things was as follows: "Discipline was altogether out of the question, and it was no uncommon thing for church members to engage in horse-racing and other like gambols."

He saw that the great need was a thorough and extensive revival of religion. And he was heart and soul a revival man, and was eager for the harvest joy of revival work. And the means requisite to obtain this result were seen with equal clearness to be aggressive and evangelistic. It would not suffice to remain in his pulpit and perform the ordinary routine of church services. He must go out among these wandering sheep like a good shepherd. He foresaw that, if he undertook this work, it would leave but little time for study and preparation for his pulpit duties. He must bid farewell, therefore, to the hope of human applause and the highest excellence as a pulpit orator. But, again, he was equal to the test of self-sacrifice. He went everywhere, preaching the word, often for months together holding neighborhood meetings every night in the week, being ab-

sent from home for two or three nights together, and visiting house after house during the day.

Nor was he disappointed in the result. Notwithstanding the opposition which he experienced from an ungodly world, and too often from lukewarm and unbelieving Christians, there commenced, in 1821, the first of a series of awakenings, some of them local and others extending over the whole congregation, which continued throughout his ministry.

This first revival, beginning in prayer at the village, extended throughout all the church and lasted for three years. One hundred and twenty-five were added to the church in a single year. Again, in 1831, '33, '35, '38, and '42, there were great religious interest and large additions. This last was a little more than a year before his death, and fitly crowned his life-harvest. More than two hundred and fifty were brought into the church. It was a period, also, of epidemic at Mellenville, and his excessive labors at this time probably had much to do in hastening the progress of the secret disease which caused his death.

But the revival which seemed to afford him the greatest satisfaction was that of 1838, which commenced about the middle of January, was mainly prevalent in the Mellenville district, (then called Centreville,) and resulted in the formation of that church with a revival impetus which it has never lost. We take this as a specimen, and add his own account of the work: "For some weeks previous to the breaking out of the work, much solemnity prevailed under the preaching of the word, and an uncommon spirit of prayer among Christians. Two little praying bands, separated about a mile apart, formed a purpose of coming together in one meeting, and to pray every night in succession during one week for the outpouring of the Spirit, to begin on Wednesday. This pious design was introduced by a request that I should come and preach in the neighborhood once or twice that week, which was done on Monday and Tuesday evenings preceding. A deep interest was very evidently felt, and much of divine influence was realized by many hearts. On the night of the fourth meeting for prayer in succession, the Holy Spirit seemed to come down as on the day of Pentecost, and filled the place where they were assembled. It was a memorable night, and something like twenty-one souls were brought under deep conviction and cried out for mercy. I entered into the field on the following week, and great power from on high reigned over the entire community; and in the space of two weeks more than sixty souls were rejoicing in hope. A protracted meeting was held in the church, and the work spread over the congregation generally, so that in every part of it some precious souls were converted, and the people in the whole region around were impressed."

Thus, while the great event of Fryenmoet's ministry was the building of this house, and that of Gebhard to harmonize and consolidate the church, the special work of Sluyter was, under God, to quicken this immense body into a new and fervent spiritual life. During his ministry of twenty-eight years nearly one thousand one hundred were received into the com-

munion of this church, (an average of about forty a year,) besides large numbers who united with other churches.

I would not have it supposed from aught that I have said that Mr. Sluyter was an inferior preacher. No man with such a nature could fail to be powerful in the pulpit. Nor could such results follow from aught else than powerful preaching. Although unstudied, his sermons were eminently scriptural, clear, direct, and fervent. His "manner and language were earnest and impassioned, and fixed the attention of his hearers." The fact is, he had that unction from heaven which arises from a realizing faith in eternal realities and the love of the soul, and without which no learning or eloquence will be aught else than as water spilt upon the ground. More particularly did these powerful and useful qualities display themselves in the more informal addresses and lectures of the neighborhood meeting. Here, and by his persuasive appeals and expostulations while he went from house to house, was his great work mainly done.

Mr. Sluyter was greatly interested in the cause of Christian education. He assisted from his own means a number of indigent youth to obtain instruction. He established the Claverack Academy, of which Rev. John S. Mabon was for some years the principal. This was the immediate forerunner of the Institute.

A great work which Mr. Sluyter did for Claverack was the establishment of Sabbath-schools. Strange to say, he met with opposition in this work, and "actually paid from his own funds Mr. Wymans, the district teacher, to take charge of and give instruction. He procured a small building, and taught himself the colored people in the truths of the Gospel in language adapted to their capacities on Sabbath afternoons, having first called upon their masters soliciting the privilege. He expended one hundred dollars in having catechisms printed to furnish the different neighborhoods of his congregation with catechetical instruction; and he often bought hymn-books and presented them to the young people to induce them to join the choir. He was himself, like his predecessor, a gifted musician. His voice in singing was so exquisitely soft and melodious as to have become noted even where he was personally unknown, and persons who took no interest in religion would come to church in the most rainy weather simply to hear the Dominie sing.

His personal piety may be conjectured from what has been already said. He was a man who lived religion as well as preached it, and this was the great secret of his power and usefulness. He was eminently a man of prayer. On one occasion, when his house had been saved from a conflagration which broke out at midnight, he spent the entire remainder of the night in devotional exercises, praying and singing with his family, and afterward alone in his study. During his last sickness he spent several days in deep heart-searchings and heart-sifting, refusing to receive visitors till he had settled beyond a peradventure the security of his hope. The scenes in his dying chamber were invested with a heavenly beauty. He was another Jacob as he prayed, blessing his children.

Before his death the overgrown congregation was abridged within reasonable limits by the separation of Hillsdale and Ghent, and the formation of churches in Hudson, Greenport, West-Ghent, Chatbam, and Mellenville, to all of which enterprises Dominie Sluyter lent his cordial sympathy and coöperation. In fact, some of them would probably have never originated or succeeded without his efforts.

When Mr. Sluyter came to Claverack, he found that the church, although nominally connected with our denomination, had never really placed itself under the jurisdiction of its Synod or of any Classis, and maintained a kind of independency. A list of churches under the control of Synod, presented to that body in 1800, makes no mention of Claverack. Various attempts had been made, especially by Dominie Gebhard, to obtain their adhesion, but without avail. Mr. Sluyter made it a condition of his acceptance that they should unite with the Classis of Rensselaer, and to him belongs the honor, as Dominie Gebhard expressly testifies, of making this a constituent and loyal member of our Reformed Dutch Church.

It may here be remarked with regard to his settlement at Claverack, that he received at the same time a flattering call from the churches of Bethlehem and Coeymans, but preferred Claverack. To the exertions of the Philips family (especially William G. and John G.) seems to be particularly due the credit of obtaining Dominie Sluyter's services. Mr. Anthony Poucher also took an active part. His salary was about \$900, without a house.

This building was altered and improved during the first year of his pastorate, a new pulpit was built and placed in the front of the church between the doors, galleries were introduced, and the pews were considerably modernized. In fact, the advent of Mr. Sluyter constituted the beginning of what may be called the modern era of the church. What with all these changes and revivals and English preaching, a new *régime* was inaugurated.

At last, this apostolic man, worn out with incessant labors, succumbed before an insidious and painful disease, which was not ascertained to be cancer in the stomach until after his death. That event occurred on the 25th of July, 1843. Fifty-six years previously he had been born in the neighboring town of Nassau. Twenty-eight years previously he had been installed by the Classis of Rensselaer as Pastor of this church and Hillsdale. He had been sole Pastor of Claverack for eighteen years, had served Hillsdale nine years, and Ghent seven. For more than a year he suffered extreme debility and almost constant pain, but preached on until within six months of his death. Among his last words were these, which may well impress the minds of all the unconverted before me, some of whom have sat under his ministry. After expressing his sense of security and preparation for another world, he added: "It is a poor time to make our peace with God in a dying hour, and a death-bed is a poor place to begin such a work." Mr. Sluyter married, in the year after his settlement at Claverack, Lydia M. W., a daughter of Hon. James Schureman, a distinguished citi-









zen of New-Jersey—a lady whom a kind Providence has spared to this day, and of whom, on account of her presence, a sense of delicacy forbids our speaking particularly, though our great love and admiration would lead us to say much.

We have also present to-day one who may well be entitled to be regarded as a relic and a representative of Mr. Sluyter's ministry. In looking over the Minutes of Consistory the other day, I found the following record for May 19th, 1838: "*Whereas*, The good order and decency of the worship of God's house depend on the faithfulness of a man of suitable character, and Nicholas S. Race, a member of this church, has been mentioned as a proper person to fill this office—therefore, *Resolved*, That N. S. Race be, and hereby is, appointed to be the Sexton of the Reformed Dutch church of Claverack, for five months from the 1st of May, 1838." We need make no further commentary on this than to state that these five months were lengthened out to twenty-nine years, and that then Mr. Race only retired on account of the rest which his advancing years rendered necessary. We are glad to welcome this faithful old servant of the church among us to-day.

Of the Pastors who have succeeded Mr. Sluyter, and who survive to celebrate this day with us, the time has hardly come to speak with the same freedom, nor does it need as minute a mention.

#### XIV. REV. IRA CONDUCT BOICE

Commenced his labors on the 1st of January, 1844. He had graduated from our seminary in the class of 1826, with the missionary David Abeel and Benjamin P. Westfall, a child of this church. He had previously been settled at Salem in Albany county for three years, at Bergen Neck in New-Jersey for thirteen years. He served this church for fifteen years with a fidelity and usefulness to which there are a cloud of witnesses to-day to testify. One hundred and thirteen members were added to the church. A new parsonage was built, which is not surpassed in beauty of situation or tastefulness and pleasantness of surroundings by any parsonage in our denomination. This edifice was greatly enlarged and improved. These wings have been added, these galleries erected for the accommodation of the students, and modern pews introduced. A new pulpit was erected at the back of the church. To his zeal and taste are we mainly indebted for these great improvements. The large scale on which the church is built and its grounds laid out, and the beauty of the parsonage, are the subject of just admiration from all visitors to Claverack. A change in the tenure of most of the pews was also made, whereby the Consistory have been able nearly to double the income of the church and provide more adequately for the support of the ministry. The Institute in its present scheme and dimensions is due to the personal exertions and foresight of Mr. Boice. His ministry inaugurated here a new era of material prosperity and generous care for the house of God.

## XV. REV. A. P. VAN GIESON

Graduated at the Theological Seminary at New-Brunswick, in the class of 1852, was licensed by the Classis of Bergen in the same year, and served the church of Catskill for the space of three years and the church of Brooklyn for four years. He commenced his labors here at the close of the year 1859, and served them until the 19th of December, 1865, when he was dismissed to take charge of the church of Greenpoint. The noble personal qualities of Brother Van Gieson, who has been my college-mate and friend of many years, the grand sermons he preached from this desk, the mingled gentleness and firmness of his intercourse among you, are too well known to need eulogy or mention at my hands. The speaker, deeply and gratefully impressed with the obligations which he owes to all those men of God into whose labors he has entered, takes peculiar pleasure to-day in acknowledging the broad and substantial foundation laid for him by his immediate predecessors. During the last few months of his pastorate, Mr. Van Gieson, by his personal exertions, lifted a debt of \$1800 from the church. His people will ever remember him with pride and affection, and sympathize with the sorrowful domestic afflictions which darkened the last days of his ministry among them.

The present pastor was installed on the 3d of May, 1866. This brings us to the centennial year of our church, to whose close we will have come on the 8th of November next. It has been a year which, in the providence and grace of God, and by the active and liberal zeal of the church, fitly ends this century of grace, of mercy, and of peace. This venerable building has been again thoroughly repaired and adorned, particularly by the frescoing of the walls and ceilings, the introduction of new windows, and the painting both of the interior and exterior. Those who recall the improvement will best appreciate the change. It was a pious and a decent tribute to the dear old church of our ancestors—a centennial celebration better than all speeches or anthems, or glorification of the fathers. The adornment and improvement of the present is *ever* the best tribute we can pay the past. But God has still more strikingly commemorated our church's centenary. The past year has been crowned with his glory by one of the most blessed and powerful revivals in its history. Since the 31st of August last, about seventy have been added to the church on confession of their faith. Those whose privilege it was to mingle in the solemn and glorious scenes of last winter, in all these neighborhood meetings, will never cease to thank God, and take courage for the work of another century.

Thus have I striven to tell the tale of this primitive and storied church, so far as the limits of a discourse like this will permit. But I have only given a surface view, and pointed out the chief headlands of its history. Who shall measure or describe the strong current of its spiritual and individual life which has flowed on underneath—the soul-histories which no eye but God's has marked, and which the disclosures of eternity alone can reveal? Every one of the ten thousand who have worshiped in this

house has had a personal experience and an individual doom. All the books of earth could hardly contain the record. The two books of final account shall unfold it in its minutest particular. Before our own tale is fully told, dear hearers, let us make sure that we are written in the Book of Life.

These centennial trees with which our church grounds have been planted, and those ancient oaks which have grown silently and steadily amid the snows and sunshine of by-gone centuries, suggest the truth that the life of a church is like their own, in the fact of its continuous and connected growth, which may be traced by its eras as a tree by its concentric rings. *Better* than these trees, because of the fruit which it has borne. Thousands of precious souls have been here born again, and educated for heaven. They are about us to-day, as a cloud of witnesses for the divine Gospel which has here been proclaimed and Jesus Christ the corner-stone on which this church was built. Seven churches of our own denomination have, in whole or in part, sprung from this ancient stock. And how much of the life of the score of churches of various denominations, which cover the ground originally occupied by the Claverack Church, is derived from the same source, may afford a fit subject of pleasing conjecture. At least two of the honored ministers of our denomination, Rev. Dr. Currie, recently deceased, and the lamented Westfall, have gone forth to preach the Gospel. What a commentary on the conservative influence of the church it is to see before me to-day a congregation composed chiefly of the children of those same honored and pious men who built this house and received their spiritual nurture within its courts. Surely the seed of the righteous is blessed; and there is no such security for the stability, righteousness, and real prosperity of any community as the planting and fostering of a Christian evangelical church. Let it be your glad and grateful task, then, to cherish this church of your fathers, that it may nourish you and your children, and generations yet unborn, with the life of God, conveyed through the word of his mouth and the ordinances of his appointment.

And now, as yonder clock, so appropriately presented by a son of this church as his centennial offering, goes on to mark the hours of the future, what shall be the history which we shall make for those who may gather on this spot when another century has flown? The time past stands here to-day with solemn warnings and urgent counsels. It bids us discriminate faithfully between its virtues and its faults. It waves us on to a more progressive and fruitful life. The merely conservative work has been done and well done. Let us ask ourselves whether the New Era, on whose threshold we stand to-day, has not a larger, grander, and more aggressive work for the sons of the old Claverack Church.









SOCIAL AND CIVIL HISTORY  
OF THE  
TOWN OF CLAVERACK.

A CENTENNIAL ADDRESS

BY REV. ELBERT S. PORTER, D.D.



## ADDRESS BY REV. DR. PORTER.

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AMONG modern improvements may be ranked the signal advance which of late has been made in the art of writing history. The religion of Christ, touching humanity, as it does, at every point, taking account of all its interests, and diffusing its benign benefits among the many, has gradually transferred the sceptre of authority from the few to the people. The beneficent changes thus wrought by the grand and ever-progressive revolution in the domestic, social, civil, and religious condition of the race have so enlarged the scope and style of written history, that it is no longer devoted exclusively to the commemoration of regal crimes, but aims instead to describe the processes by which nations have been rendered happy through the prevalence of virtuous industry and popular intelligence.

As the beds of great rivers are filled by the contributions of thousands of lesser streams, so the history of a nation is the product of the local histories of the communities which compose it. Since this is so, every organized community is in duty bound to gather up its traditional treasures, freshen the inscriptions on its memorial stones, and preserve those worthy records which hold the names around which cluster the immortal deeds of saintly faith or of heroic patriotism. For as trees draw nourishment from their roots, so every community invigorates itself by the filial act of reviving its past, that it may contribute whatever it had of the best and the noblest to the growth of the present and the maturing fruitage that is to gladden the future. To this good and comely task we are this day giving our thoughts and the affectionate earnestness of our grateful hearts.

We are gathered to a memorial festival, the like of which our fathers saw not, and which our children shall not see. To us is given the high and rare privilege to hear the mystic clock of time strike the close of an historic century. All who were here one hundred years ago sleep, and some, hard by this sanctuary which they built. Between them and us, two or three generations have come and gone. Within these courts, congregation after congregation has been gathered, only to pass in turn to the larger congregation that crowds the city of the dead. A few more rolling years, and we, too, shall lie down where the dust of patriarchal sires now rests, and they who come after us will, perhaps, recite our names in accents as tender with filial reverence as we shall recite to-day the names we can not let fall into the dark and turbid stream of forgotten things.

The love we bear our kindred, and the attachment we have for places



around which are entwined some of the fondest associations of our lives, combine to excite and sanctify our interest in an occasion so rare and so impressive as this. And because our sensibilities are to be gratified by the services which long memories are this day to render, I shall trust your good will and patience to aid me as I now undertake to review with rapid words some of the chief events and conspicuous features of your local history.

Already we have listened with attentive ears and thankful hearts to the record of the divine work begun here a century and a half ago, and continued with uninterrupted faithfulness and with ever-augmenting measures of blessing, even until this day. You remember how it is written of the pious Israelites that, when they had taken down their harps from the rivers of Babylon and returned to their Holy City, and under Nehemiah rebuilt and beautified their temple, Ezra opened the book of the Lord, "and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground."

There are with us this day not a few whose memories go back to the century preceding this. Their years are links in the chain which unites long vanished generations with the present. They still live to testify concerning the changes which have swept over this community; and for our eyes they are, indeed, venerable and sacred memorials, from whose whitened locks there descends a hallowed light wherein we may read the precious promise, "Even to hoar hairs will I carry you." Standing before these aged men and women, we pause and almost wait with reverential silence as we seem to hear them say to the God of all their years: "Cast us not off in the time of old age; forsake us not when our strength faileth." "Because thou hast been our help, therefore beneath the shadow of thy wings will we continue to trust."

We give them welcome and honor, and strive to share their thoughts and to participate in their feelings of gladness as they look around them this day, and behold their long-cherished sanctuary beautiful in its age, crowded with a generation intent upon commemorating that divine goodness to which a century is now setting its seal. Well may they exclaim as they look down from the height of their many years, "*Instead of the fathers have come up the children.*"

From these introductory observations, I now pass to sketch in outline the social and civil history of this town. As nothing of the kind has been attempted hitherto, I have been constrained to gather my materials from many sources; some from books, some from old family manuscripts, and many from the memories of different persons still living among you. Nothing more than a sketch will be offered. Yet if this should serve in any wise to gratify the feelings and animate the hopes of those who are now charged with the sacred duty of promoting the welfare of this com-

munity, I shall be thankful to have been honored with the privilege of having brought my humble offering before you.

The Reformation of the sixteenth century produced the republic of the Netherlands. Its seven provinces united their strength against Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second, his son. After a war of unexampled fortitude, courage, and heroism—a war which lasted through a period of eighty years—the Batavian republicans had beaten all their papal enemies on land and on sea, and established a government, the like of which for wisdom and liberality the European world had never before seen. It is but simple truth to claim that, when our own government was to be framed, its framers had no better model in all the past to consult than the one furnished them by the seven provinces of the Netherlands. Civil and religious liberty of which we boast, the Netherlanders had secured in a good degree for themselves; and not only for themselves, but also for Huguenot, Puritan, Walloon, and Bohemian, by their unexcelled bravery in an age when civil and ecclesiastical despotism had turned nearly the whole world besides into either a prison-house or a field of carnage.

The most critical investigations have established the fact that the aboriginal inhabitants of the Low Countries were never brought under the yoke of a military conqueror. Cæsar overran Gaul and portions of Germany, but the Batavii and the Belgi, having delivered battle in the field, retreated into their native forests or morasses, and there defied the advance of the Roman eagles.

A hardier, tougher, or more independent race has not been found among all the tribes of Japheth than were the rude people who, at the beginning of the Christian era, were contending with the waves and tides of the North Sea, as their descendants fifteen hundred years afterward were found fighting with dauntless courage against the perfidy of Rome and the cruelty of Philip.

In the history of the civilized world, there is not a single parallel to the marvelous energy and uncompromising vigor of purpose which from generation to generation characterized the inhabitants of the Low Countries. Having first wrested their territory from the sea, and then their freedom from the mouth of a Papal hell, ever open to devour it and them, the *Batavian republicans*, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, presented the spectacle of a free state, to which the eyes of the oppressed in all neighboring nations were turned.

Holland [Hollow Land], the chief province of the Republican Confederation, had the principal seaports, the largest cities, and the political capital, and thus gave its name to the people, language, and state. In the zenith of its power it ruled the seas by its marine, and controlled the commerce of the world through the enterprise of its merchants; while, by the valor of its military chieftains and the wisdom of its statesmen, it held in check the ambition of Austria, Spain, France, and England.

Good and great principles, like light, shine for all. For this reason the liberty of Holland diffused itself among the people of despotic coun-

tries, and thus, though the Batavian Republic has long since lost its splendor, still its influence is felt to-day wherever the Saxon tongue pours forth its passionate eloquence in praise of nations that have heroically and successfully struggled for the sacred cause of human rights.

In the year 1664 the New-Netherlands, which had been occupied about forty years by the Hollanders, was ceded to the British crown, and Peter Stuyvesant retired from the Governorship of the Province.

But though the sceptre of civil authority was transferred, still there remained at that time in possession of the Hollanders in the Old World, all those elements of power which contribute most effectually to the development of individual enterprise, social prosperity, and national greatness. While England was strong enough to grasp and hold the New-Netherlands, still she was too weak at home to be able, without the help of Holland, to secure or regulate the liberties of her own people.

Having been for nearly a century a sanctuary of refuge for the exiles from all lands, it was reserved for Holland at length to place upon the British throne a prince whose wisdom in council and whose valor in the field all Europe had learned to admire.

While engaged in commenting, with his usual power of description, upon the revolution of 1688 in England, the historian Macaulay awards to the great stadtholder of Holland a place among the chief benefactors of his nation. These are his words: "For the authority of law, for the security of property, for the peace of our streets, for the happiness of our homes, our gratitude is due, under Him who raises and pulls down nations at his pleasure, to the Long Parliament, to the Convention, and to William of Orange."

You may possibly ask, What bearing these remote events have upon your local history? I answer, Very much every way, as the sequel will show.

Three principal colonies were early planted on these shores, of strangely variant if not antagonistic peculiarities. The first was that of Jamestown, Virginia, composed in the main of English cavaliers, fond of hereditary rank, domineering in temper, and courteous toward religion so long as it did not interfere with their pleasures or their vices.

The Puritan colony at Boston was of a different stamp. It consisted of men who had suffered for conscience' sake — who had waged a fierce battle with Popery and prescription, and had come to America to find a place where they might enjoy, unmolested, their own religious opinions and ways. Continued persecutions had rendered them sharp, controversial, and obstinate in their convictions. They were honest but intolerant. Yet their intolerance, though it may stain their historic renown, can not deprive them of their right to be regarded as conscientious men, who, perhaps, with severe and narrow tempers, injured their own peace of mind by their constitutional contempt of all who failed to share their views and purposes.

Had the interests of either civil or religious liberty in this country been

left to the keeping and control of a New-England secular hierarchy, American institutions would never have been what they now are. It would add no lustre to this occasion were an unworthy attempt to be made to rob New-England of a single gem in its crown of honor. Yet, looking backward, as we are now doing, to contemplate the deeds and character of your ancestors, it is entirely fit to say that very important portions of the early history of this country have been miswritten and misrepresented. The Puritans were honest, religious zealots, but they had no notions of liberty, either for church or state, that could fit them to be the pioneers and founders of a great and prosperous nation.

While it is conceded that Holland asserted her benign ascendancy in securing freedom and prosperity to England, it must also be claimed, what impartial truth will sooner or later grant, that the early founders of the Empire State, from the beginning, held and exercised those very principles which were afterward incorporated into our laws and institutions.

In his discourse before the New-York Historical Society, Chancellor Kent bore this testimony :

“The Dutch discoverers of New-Netherland were grave, temperate, firm, persevering men, who brought with them the industry, the economy, the simplicity, the integrity, and the bravery of their Belgic sires, and with those virtues they also imported the lights of the Roman civil law and the purity of the Protestant faith. To that period we are to look, with chastened awe and respect, for the beginnings of our city and the works of our primitive fathers ; our *Albani patres, atque altæ Romæ*.”

Philosophical historians and large-minded statesmen have expressed their admiration of that good Providence which chose for the founders of the Empire State men who, in their native country, had been partakers of the fruits of regulated liberty, patient labor, and unwearied enterprise. Having seen with their own eyes the operation of a comparatively free and tolerant government in the Old World, they naturally desired to possess and to exercise the same rights here to which they had been accustomed from their childhood. Hence, it came to pass that New-York and Albany, from their foundation until this hour, have exerted a wholesome, formative influence both upon the whole structure of our social life and upon the spirit of our legislation.

When Puritans were persecuting those who, like themselves, had fled from persecution, the Hollanders were showing mercy and doing kindness to Jesuits and other time-long enemies. Zealous as they were for their own faith, yet they scorned the bigot's narrow and clouded path. While they insisted upon their own rights, they were at the same time generous in their consideration of the rights of others.

In 1630, Killian Van Rensselaer, a merchant of Amsterdam, purchased of the Red men a tract of land around Fort Orange, or Albany, which was forty-eight miles long by twenty-four miles in breadth. This tract included what are now known as Albany and Rensselaer, together with large



portions of Greene, Montgomery, Schenectady, Saratoga, Schoharie, and Columbia counties.

As the history of your county is therefore identified with that of Albany during a period of a hundred and fifty-six years, I must briefly narrate a few events which bear upon the general course of my narrative.

Hendrick Hudson sailed up the North River as far as where Albany now is in the year 1609. Adventurers came over from Holland in 1614, and built a fort on what is yet called Castle Island, and whence the village of Castleton derives its name. In 1617, another fort was erected at the mouth of Norman's Kill, and, in 1623, Fort Orange was built on the spot now used for the principal steamboat landing at Albany. An agricultural colony was planted in that year, from which time may be dated the permanent settlement of the region about Albany. In that year, the first white woman ventured there. Her name was Cateline Trico. A shipload of colonists arrived in 1630, and others followed in succeeding years. It is impossible to determine with accuracy what provision was made for religious instruction among the people at and around Fort Orange prior to the year 1642. Dr. Livingston, in one of his manuscripts, says: "In Albany they had ministers as early as any in New-York, if not before them." It is certain, however, that the Reformed Church *there* stood in the relation of a parent to all of the same faith which were organized at an early day in the then district of Rensselaerwyck. This district was redivided, after the lapse of many years, into smaller districts, such as we now style towns. Kinderhook and Claverack were the original districts of all that part of what is now included in Columbia county, north of the Livingston Manor. Both were erected into districts in the month of March, 1772. Kinderhook has priority of age by just two days.

Dutchess county originally belonged to the Ulster district, and included the manor lands of Robert Livingston. Concerning that Manor I shall quote a few curious items from the Documentary History of the State, since they too form a portion of the annals of this county and of this congregation:

The Livingston Patent contained two purchases. The largest was the Roeliff Jansen's Kill tract, which started at Oak Hill on the north, faced the river to the southern limit of Germantown, a distance of twelve miles, and then extended back with equal width to the Taghkanic Hills. As you may like to know how much was paid for all that now fertile region, I will enumerate precisely what was given for it by Robert Livingston: "Three hundred guilders, eight blankets and two child's blankets, five and twenty ells of duffels and four garments of strouds, ten large shirts and ten small ditto, ten pairs of large stockings, ten of small ditto, six guns, fifty pounds of powder, fifty sticks of lead, four caps, ten kettles, ten axes, ten adzes, two pounds of paint, twenty little scissors, twenty looking glasses, one hundred fish hooks, awls and nails one hundred, four rolls of tobacco, one hundred pipes, ten bottles, three kegs of rum, one barrel of strong beer and twenty knives, four stroud coats, two duffel coats, and four tin



kettles." Moderate as this payment was, it appears to have given entire satisfaction to all the Indians concerned in the sale except one. It is on record that four years afterward a certain Cripplebush woman of Catskill, urged some unsatisfied claim, whereupon arrangements were made to buy off Siakanochiqui with "one cloth garment and one cotton shift, for her share in a certain flatt of land scituate in the manor of Livingston." Thus ended the first lawsuit originating about the manor. It was not the last. The Taghkanic Patent was at length included with that of the first purchase, in the year 1686, under one general grant, by Thomas Dongan, Governor of the province.

Three years after the close of the Revolutionary War, on the 4th of April, 1786, the county of Columbia was formed. It took a portion of Albany county, and the Livingston Manor from Dutchess county. You will thus notice that the organization of Claverack preceded that of the county by the space of fourteen years. This *venerable* edifice antedates by five years the formation of the Claverack district, and, as we have already heard, the organization of the church itself carries us back to the very beginnings of social Christian life in this region.

As the stone was set up in Mizpeh for a memorial, so does this house of God stand this day as a history in itself of the community over whose earlier as well as later years it has stood watch and guard.

Let us now transport our thoughts backward, and travel with the century as it rolls onward to this present. We must set up stakes to mark the place of beginning, so that we may clearly see how fast and how far the world has moved hereabout within the period of a hundred years.

A little more than a century ago, Indian tribes still roamed at will through the primeval forests which covered the larger portion of this State. In 1754, the white inhabitants of the colonies were alarmed by the prospect of a threatened French and Indian war. To prepare for its expected coming the first American Congress ever convened met in the city of Albany, on the 19th of June, 1754. That was the first effort which the infant colonies made to act in concert for the common welfare. Seven colonies were represented in that Congress.

Eleven years later, in 1765, the people of the several colonies were becoming much excited over the British Stamp Act, and Cadwallader Colden, then Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of New-York, wrote a letter to the British ministers, in which he stated that the "mob" threatened resistance. In that letter he inclosed a copy of a handbill which was being circulated, and which read as follows :

#### PRO PATRIA.

"The first man that either distributes or makes use of stampt paper, let him take care of his house, person & effects." Vox POPULI."

"WE DARE."

Thus it is seen that, when the walls of this sanctuary were about to be reared, the people of these colonies were preparing in earnest to lay the foundations of this free and independent nation.

There were, in 1766, local disturbances of a serious nature in which the population of this region were deeply interested. But of these I shall speak hereafter. We shall now give our attention to home matters. In the year 1704, Killian Van Rensselaer of Albany, conveyed to his brother Hendrick a large tract of land, which by the Indians was called *Pot koke*, and which in the Dutch language was described and known as Claverack. John Van Rensselaer, son of Hendrick, erected this district into the Lower Manor to distinguish it from that on the north. He was born in 1711 and died in 1783. The deed for the land on which this Church stands came from him. His son John occupied the manor-house, a mile east of the village, on the site now occupied by the mansion of Mr. Jacob Esslestyne. Van Rensselaer claimed 170,000 acres. This claim was, however, maintained with great difficulty. Squatters from Massachusetts took possession of portions of this tract, and were expelled by force of arms. In 1766, a general disturbance arose among the tenants on the Livingston manor in the eastern part of Claverack and in Albany county. It was during the anti-rent troubles of that year that Cornelius Hogeboom, grandfather of the Hon. Henry Hogeboom and Cornelius Van Dusen, both civil officers, were shot while in the discharge of their public duties.\* Some account of these agitations is contained in the Documentary History of the State which is too full for me to quote here.

The portion of the ancient territory of Claverack at present included in the town, was originally settled by Hollanders and by Germans from the Palatinate. At the beginning of the last century the population scattered through this region was exceedingly sparse. There is, however, every reason to think that this village was the first place occupied in this section of the county. At that time there were but four houses in all in the Livingston Manor. A census of Claverack which then included Greenport, Stockport, a part of Ghent and Hillsdale, showed the number of inhabitants to be only 216, and of that number 19 were slaves.

It is of course impossible for me to trace with perfect accuracy, or with exact minuteness of detail all the family links which connect the first settlers in these parts with their present descendants now living and resident here. Yet I have obtained some particulars of an exceedingly interesting character, and which belong to the social history of our time. It is evident that the Esselstynes, the Hogebooms, the Millers, the Van Dusens, the Ten Broecks, the Van Rensselaers, and the Konyns were among the very first who occupied and cultivated the farm lands in this immediate vicinity. There are some names familiar to us which are found in the records of immigration to New-Netherlands before its cession to the British. I find among those records the names of Jannetje Teunis Van

\* They were shot about one half mile east of what was formerly known as the Krum church.

Ysselstyne, Garret Cornelius Van Newkirk, wife, and sucking child, and Gillis Mandeville, in 1659. Garret Aartsen Van Buren and Garret Cornelissen Van Buren, in 1660. Petrus Marcellus Van Best, and four other families of the Van Bests, in 1661, and Direk Storm, wife and three children, Fernandus De Muldor, and Hans Melius, in 1664. These are the only names of that early emigration which I have been able to identify with the names now common among us.

There is, however, the roll of a military company, organized and under review at Oak Hill in 1715, in which I find the following names: Johannes Dyckman, Capt.; Tobias Ten Broeck, Lieut.; Johannes Spor, Ensign; Abraham Vosburgh, William White, William Scot, sergeants; John Decker, Ephraim Race, Hendrick Bross, corporals. Privates: William Winne, Leendert Konyn, Jonathan Race, Johannes Pulver, Tunis Decker, Coenraet Ham, Coenraet Schuereman, John Emenils Ploss, John Coenraed Petri, Lawrence Knickerbocker, Jacob Stever, Johannes Rosman, Jacob Coens, Nicus Janse Whitbeck, John Whitbeck, Guysbert Oosterhout, Andrew Gardner, John Leggat, Jury Ruverberger, Baltus Stiever, Jans Williamschoen, Diderigh Snyder, Tenis Snyder, and Harmanus Sagen-dorph.

At that time all these persons were residents of Livingston's Manor. But the larger advantages offered by the proprietor of Claverack, induced many of them no doubt to remove at an early day within its boundaries.\*

By the aid of certain family manuscripts, and the verbal information derived from their descendants, I have been able to obtain some authentic facts respecting a few of the earliest families connected with the social foundations of your town.

Martin Esslestyne arrived in America in the year 1660. He had two sons, Jacob and Cornelius. The latter married Cornelia Vredenburg of Kingston. They had seven sons, among whom were Jacob and Gabriel, who removed to Claverack in 1710.

Jacob married Magdalen Brodhead, of Ulster. They had five daughters and two sons, Richard and Cornelius. Among the children of Cornelius was Richard, born 1731, and died in 1783, the year in which peace with England was declared. Richard was a patriot and a soldier. He held the rank of major in a regiment of militia raised in Claverack to resist the northern encroachments of the British troops. From a full return of this regiment, drawn up in the year 1772, I copy in full the names of its officers. They are the names of patriots who offered their lives for the liberties we enjoy. It is no small satisfaction we shall feel in throwing back from this distance the tribute of our praise to their honored memories. Here is the roll. It is in the handwriting of Colonel Hogeboom—Jeremiah Hogeboom, Colonel; Johannes Van Hoeson, Lieutenant-Colonel. There were ten companies, whose officers were as follows:

\* *Life* leases were given on the Livingston, and *perpetual* leases on the Lower Rensselaer Manor.

Hendrick Van Hoesen, Francis Herdick (Harder?), Samuel Ten Broeck. Thomas Storm, Peter Loup, Isaac N. Vosburgh, Isaac Spoor. William Van Alstyne, John Orphan, Jeremiah Muller. James Spencer, Roger Kinney, Jonathan Dean, Stephen Graves. Stephen Hogeboom, Cors. S. Muller, Joachim Muller, Peter Hogeboom, John McKinstry, Samuel Cole, James Bagly, Joshua Whitney. Casparus Conyne, Robert Van Dusen, Thomas Pechtel, James Hogeboom.

Johannes Plass, Dirk Delemater, William Hollenbeck, Jacob Carter.

Richard Esslestyne—who acted as Major—David Bonesteel, William Phillip, Richard Horton, Jeremiah C. Miller, William Van Ness, Jr., Hendrick Muller.

The above are names which deserve to be, and doubtless are, held in honor. They belong to the immortal roll of patriots, whose devotion to their country, to liberty, and to the rights of man, can not be too highly eulogized, since it is to them we owe the possession of our free institutions. In the history of the town of Claverack, the names just recited should be cherished in most affectionate remembrance. They are among its chief memorials. The descendants of these worthy soldiers and patriots may well be glad to trace a pedigree which connects them with the choicest spirits that were once known to brighten here the dark days when war arose like a tempest, and threatened destruction to all man can hold as precious beyond life itself.

Richard Esslestyne had two sons, named Jacob, born in 1762, and Cornelius, born 1765. They were the more immediate ancestors of the two branches of the family now residing in this town.\* From Jacob, have descended Tobias, who occupies the very soil which has been transmitted down to the sixth generation in the same family,—Jacob, a resident of Wisconsin, and John Esslestyne, of Mellenville.

From Cornelius have descended Richard, Jacob, (who now occupies the place of the former patroon,) Charles, a distinguished member of your county bar, Isaac, William, Robert, and Martin Esslestyne, all well known among you as citizens worthy of their ancestry.

The *Miller* family, so numerous in its various branches, trace their origin to a common ancestor, Cornelius Stevense Muldor, who obtained from Hendrick Van Rensselaer a continuous lease for about one thousand acres of land. His residence was near the spot now occupied by one of his descendants, Mr. John Miller. It may not be safe to undertake to reverse an established opinion on a matter so delicate as that of family descent; but it seems to be capable of proof that the original name of Miller was De Muldor, and if so, then it is clearly a Huguenot and not a German designation. Observing, as I often have, the French features of some of the Millers, it raised a question in my mind whether they were or were not the offspring of those brave defenders of their faith, who, after the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, gave up their country rather than bow to the detestable tyranny of Rome. Be this as it may, I shall briefly state that portions of



the land originally occupied by Cornelius Stevense Muldor are yet in the possession of several of his direct descendants. He had four sons, of whom Stephanus and Christopple were two. Christopple was father of Killian, and he of Joachim Miller, who was an officer in the regiment already named. He was father of John S. and Killian Miller, and John S. was father of John, who married Miss Staats, a descendant of one of the old Albany families of that name, and who resided with us.

Stephanus, son of Cornelius, the founder of the family, received a deed from his father, in 1723, for the farm on which Mr. Harmon Miller now resides, but which, at that time, extended on the other side of the creek southward. This Stephanus, in 1726, was one of the committee to erect the first house of worship in this place. He had a son, Cornelius Stevense, who, also, in turn had a son named Cornelius C. S. Miller. This last-named Cornelius had two sons and two daughters. The names of the sons were Stephen and Cornelius; of the daughters, Rachel and Cornelia. Miss Maria Miller still resides on land owned by the first Stephanus, and Stephen Miller Van Wyck also owns land which has descended in the family in unbroken succession. Among the descendants of this branch are Hon. Judge Theodore Miller, Hon. John Gaul, Jr., Jacob W. Miller, and the late Henry C. Miller, of Hudson.

The first Killian Miller had two sons, Joachim and Cornelius. This Cornelius was father of Jeremiah Miller, grandfather of Jeremiah M. Race, who occupies a portion of the original estates, and of Jeremiah Miller Williams, who married a granddaughter of Dr. John Gebhard. They occupy the farm owned by John Bay, a lawyer, and who afterward built, about eighty years ago, the house now occupied by Miss Catherine Phillips.

The Van Dusen family is among the oldest, tracing back its beginnings to an ancestor who built the brick house near the creek, on the south shoulder of Beighraft's Mountain. Robert, who served in the regiment named, was father of Mr. Tobias R. Van Dusen, long an esteemed and worthy officer in this church, as his father was before him.

The Van Rensselaers all sprang from the Albany stock. John, the proprietor of Claverack, had a son, John I. Van Rensselaer, who was father of Jacob Rutzen Van Rensselaer, a distinguished man in the public affairs of his day. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1821. The manorial claims were sold by John I. Van Rensselaer to a Mr. Penfield, who in turn sold to Mr. John Watts, long time a resident here, who was grandfather of J. Watts De Puyster, of Poughkeepsie. He obtained a decision in his favor from the Supreme Court of the United States, giving him the title as heir to the remaining manorial claims. That decision was rendered about sixteen years ago, since when the entire soil of the "Lower Manor" has been held in fee simple by its occupants.

On the old road to Johnstown stands the spacious mansion of Mr. Alexander S. Van Rensselaer. That was built with brick one hundred and one years ago, by Kasparus Konyn, a Revolutionary patriot, and who was an



ancestor, on their maternal side, of Mr. Alexander S. Van Rensselaer and Mr. John H. Dickie.

From the earliest times of your local history the Hogebooms have occupied a conspicuous place in the affairs of your town and county. Some of them have been constantly in public life. Col. Jeremiah Hogeboom, already named, proved his patriotism in many ways. He was grandfather of Col. James Watson Webb, who was born in the old brick house, now occupied by Mr. Adams. His son, Stephen, was a member of the Constitutional Convention in 1801, of which Aaron Burr was president. It may have been about that time when Aaron Burr stopped, on his way to Albany, at a hotel kept in the old farm-house now owned by Robert Esslestyne. The Dutch language was then the common speech in use in these parts. While Burr was dining, he called for a *napkin*. The good hostess did not understand him, so she called her husband, and they had an earnest conversation over the puzzling problem. At length they discovered that he wanted a kniptong, and so they brought him a pair of *pincers* instead of a napkin. The mistake was Burr's fault. He should have understood Dutch. Had he been brought up to that tongue, he would not have been a traitor, for no true Dutchman has ever yet been found to be the enemy of his country. Among the Hogebooms I should mention the name of Judge John C. Hogeboom, a descendant of Abraham Hogeboom, and father of Henry Hogeboom, at present one of the Justices of the Supreme Court. Both in religious and civil affairs he rendered good and memorable service. He was two years in succession a member of Assembly, and also a member of the Council of Appointment. In his political history of the State, Hammond makes the following mention of him :

"I can not write the name of John C. Hogeboom without recording my testimony to the goodness of his heart, and the energy and vigor of his intellectual powers. He was a native of Columbia county, where he died. His education had been limited, but he was one of nature's great men, possessing a sound judgment and clear and discriminating mental faculties. Ardent and indefatigable in advancing the interests and wishes of his friends, he was courteous and liberal toward his political opponents. He lived esteemed and respected, and died bitterly lamented by all, and especially by those who had the happiness of knowing him."

The Ten Broeck family is very ancient. Rachel, a daughter of Hendrick Van Rensselaer, married Samuel Ten Broeck, one of the committee in the erection of the first church, in 1726. He had a son, Jeremiah, who also had a son, Samuel J., who was father of Adam Ten Broeck, who served during a period of seven years in the Revolutionary War. His widow resides in this village. She is now in the eighty-eighth year of her age, and converses with fluency respecting affairs of former days. She is honored in the affections of her relatives, and is highly esteemed as a mother in Israel. She is a member of this church.

The ancestor of the Phillips family came from Holland, and settled first in Germantown. He had six sons, among whom were George, William,

Henry, and David, who removed to Claverack and became identified with its history. The other two sons remained in Germantown.

George married Jane Ostrander. They were the first couple united in marriage by Rev. Dr. Gebhard, after his arrival here. George held the commission of a captain during the Revolutionary War, and acted as commissary of subsistence.

The Phillips family became also connected with the Hortons. Michael Horton came from England, settled here, and married Elizabeth, daughter of Jacob Esselstyne. Michael was a commissioned officer in the American army, and was present at the surrender of Burgoyne. His son Joseph married the eldest daughter of George Phillips, and was grandfather of Rev. Francis Horton, of Catskill.

Two other well-beloved ministers of the Gospel trace their lineage to and are worthy sons of this town—Rev. Richard Whitbeck and Rev. Martin L. Burger, who may read, with filial interest, all that herein appears respecting the Miller family, to which they belong.

Among the descendants of Captain George Phillips were John, Peter, and James—the latter the beloved physician whose skillful and valuable attentions many of you have received, and whose name you therefore honor and love.

I have not enough information to warrant an attempt to trace this family through its various branches. It is certain, however, that it has ever been distinguished for intelligence, public spirit, piety, and patriotism. From some of that family this town and church have received most important service, as the records of each abundantly prove.

The Rossmans have for generations been an active and influential family. They have been for the most part farmers; but many of that name have also occupied conspicuous positions in the state and the church, and have adorned some of the liberal professions by their eminent science and industry.

Among the older families of this section were the Van Nesses, Jordans, the Schoemakers, intermarried with the Vanderpoels, Mesicks,\* Storms, and Sagendorphs; but it is now impossible to go to into a special enumeration of their several branches. The Mesicks and Sagendorphs are occupying land which has descended to the third and fourth generation.

Thus we have seen on what a good, honest, Dutch foundation the social structure of this town was laid. I do not believe the fathers were any better than their children. But it is an encouragement for children to remember the sterling and Christian and patriotic virtues of their fathers, and to be mindful of the truth that no ancestry, however honorable, can varnish or dignify an indolent, vicious, and irreligious life. Look back and inquire whether the experience of this community does not prove that integrity, sobriety, industry, and religion confer the highest rewards?

In 1772, Claverack was erected into a district. Prior to that time it had

\* Hendrick Mesick had a commission as lieutenant from Cadwallader Colden, dated 1762.

been governed by the patroons, who exercised a *quasi* feudal authority. But population had increased, and the interests of society demanded legislation. At that time Livingston Manor, Claverack, and Kinderhook, each sent one delegate to the Provincial Legislature. The county had not yet been set off, and the affairs of the district were conducted in a domestic way. For several years a committee of safety met in the house now owned and occupied by Mr. Jeremiah M. Race. During the Revolution its cellar was used as a jail for the imprisonment of tories; how many were brought out from it to be hung or shot I do not know. It is, however, very certain that far better things than tories are in the habit of coming out of that cellar now.

Among ante-Revolutionary matters deserving mention I must not omit to say there are standing among us a few relics of the olden time. The most aged is the Van Hoesen house, built in 1729, now owned by Mr. Ludlow. Next is the Ten Broeck house, of brick, north of Mr. Brownell's farm. The third is the residence of my friend Mr. Jeremiah M. Race, which is now one hundred years old. I should gladly wish, if my selfishness could be consulted, that its present occupants might remain in it until the next centennial celebration. But neither we nor our friends can live here forever, nor should we wish to live beyond the time when our work has been finished. Happy shall we be if we live well.

A few years prior to the war of the Revolution—at a time, however, when it was imminent—several families removed from New-York to Claverack. Among these was William Henry Ludlow, who built and resided first in the house now occupied by Mr. Martin Miller. He opened a grain store in the old stone house once owned by Gabriel Esslestyne. That business, soon after the Revolution, became very extensive, so much so indeed that Claverack was the chief market town for this portion of the manor. Mr. Ludlow built the large mansion where his descendants now reside about eighty years ago.

Mrs. Ludlow,\* widow of the late William B. Ludlow, is herself a most interesting bond of connection between Revolutionary times and the present. Her father, Robert, was himself greatly distinguished, and was brother of Gouverneur Morris, one of the chief makers of our national Constitution. Robert H. Morris, brother of Mrs. Ludlow, was known to many of you as an able lawyer, a sterling patriot, and an incorruptible judge.

The county of Columbia was set off from Albany and organized April 4th, 1786, and Claverack was the county-seat until 1805, when it was removed to Hudson. The courthouse was built at an expense of £3600. It is now the elegant and hospitable mansion of Peter Hoffman, Esq.

Although it was not completed until 1788, yet around that Claverack courthouse linger some of the choicest memories. There Elisha Williams

\* The author is indebted to Mr. Stephen B. Miller and Judge Henry Hogeboom, of Hudson, Mrs. Julia Ludlow, John Miller, Tobias Esselstyne, Miss Maria Miller, John H. Dickie, Frederick Mesick, Jeremiah M. Race, and others, of Claverack, and to Dr. Lewis G. Gebhard of Philadelphia, for valuable aid while collecting materials for his discourse.

and James Spencer, Francis Sylvester, the Vanderpoels, William W. Van Ness, and other advocates of great ability, engaged in the legal conflicts of their day. It is said that in the last trial conducted in that courthouse, Alexander Hamilton appeared in a case between the patroon and his tenants at Nobletown, and displayed all the higher qualities of his stately and prodigious intellect.

Claverack remained the post-office station for Hudson until 1790. In 1786, Killian Hogeboom was postmaster, and on the thirteenth day of July of that year, the *first* list of letters published in the county appeared.

On September 26th, 1786, Killian K. Van Rensselaer, the first clerk and surrogate of the county, opened his office at the house of Dr. Joseph Mullins, then of this village.

As a curious illustration of the temper of those times, and of the manner in which gentlemen vindicated their honor, it may be mentioned that on April 24th, 1787, Peter B. Ten Broeck advertised Killian K. Van Rensselaer, the surrogate, as "a coward, pusillanimous and destitute of the truth." Van Rensselaer replied in the same strain; but it is not known that any thing more precious than ink was shed on the occasion.

About the same time, or a little earlier, Dirck Van De Kar advertised that John Mason and four others, against whom he had a precept for £4, intimidated him by threats, so as to obtain a receipt in full for Mason's debt, and two notes of £20 each, without consideration; and therefore the said Dirck forewarns all persons not to buy, as he will not pay them.

These are glimpses which enable us to see that among the men of a former generation there were some outcroppings of native depravity. And perhaps they may also increase our confidence in the wisdom of the words which forbid us to say that the "former times were better than the present."

In 1796, the presidential electors met in Hudson, cast their vote, and then came out to Claverack to get their dinner at Gordon's tavern.

The changes which have taken place here during the current century have been so many and so great, that I must content myself in mentioning a few only. Before the application of steam to navigation, in 1807, the post-road west of this church was the great thoroughfare between New-York and Albany. Travelers abounded, and hotels lined either side of the way. Loaded wagons from the East were sometimes seen standing in a line of a mile or more in length, waiting to be unloaded.

But the nineteenth century has been one of incessant revolution here as elsewhere. Every thing in form is different now from what it was in the days of the primitive settlers. There are those living who saw the *Olermont*, the first steamboat, pass the landing at Hudson. They probably did not see what prophecies of future progress she puffed out of her rude smoke-stack. But the *Olermont* was the forerunner of a new dispensation in the industrial, social, and commercial world. Facility of communication with New-York enhanced the price of land, and enriched those who before had been comparatively poor. It did more, it brought into rural



life something of the intense activity of the town, and popularized knowledge by increasing the means of diffusing it. In 1838, the railroad between Hudson and West-Stockbridge was opened. This, too, had a perceptible effect upon the condition of society here, and enhanced the opportunities for travel, which is, in itself, an active educational power.

In agricultural skill and consequent wealth, Claverack has now become second to but very few towns in the whole State. Yet there are those still living who can remember when vast pitfalls were dug within sight of this very spot, for the purpose of entrapping wolves. The soil, naturally fertile, yielded, it is true, a generous return to the husbandman. But during nearly the whole of the first quarter even of this century, farming was conducted in a careless and unprofitable way. The all-devouring curse of slavery was then here to waste the strength, blight the morals, and corrupt the whole framework of society. The whites, indeed, owned the land, but the negroes devoured the increase thereof. It was not until slavery was abolished in this State that the farmers here, as a class, began to thrive. Now, wherever we take our stand, and whatever view we may gain, there are outspread before us such scenes of rural enchantment as never fail to please and elevate the mind. Your farmers are princes. Masters of the implements of husbandry, they have converted their broad acres into gardens of beauty, and from their pleasant palaces—for such, in truth, the majority of farm-houses in this town are—they walk forth in the morning's early light to the cheerful labors of the day, free, independent, and enterprising.

Such are the natural attractions of soil and scenery contained within your borders, and common, indeed, to this county, that all who have been able to compare them with other portions of the world are most cordial and even enthusiastic in their praise. Yet to these attractions there have been added those of a rarer value—intelligence, industry, virtue, and religion. These are, after all, the chief treasures of every community, and here they may be seen combined, not yet in their perfection, but in growing proportions and increasing power.

“Scenes must be beautiful which, daily viewed,  
Please daily, and whose novelty survives  
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.”

But upon what eye has the variety, beauty, and grandeur of our rural scenery here ever failed to throw the charm of some fresh delight? And as, among the population of our town, one is permitted to extend his acquaintance, he is more and more inclined to borrow for the expression of his feelings the words of Halleck:

—————“View them near  
At home, where all their worth and power is placed,  
And there their hospitable fires burn clear;  
And there the lowest farm-house hearth is graced



With manly hearts, in piety sincere ;  
 Faithful in love, in honor stern and chaste,  
 In friendship warm and true, in danger brave,  
 Beloved in life and sainted in the grave."

To the introduction of improved implements of industry and of labor-saving machinery must be attributed here, as elsewhere, the immense advancement of the farming interest, both as it respects material and moral results. The assertion may seem strange, but it is true, that good ploughs, hoes, rakes, reapers, mowers, and hay-presses are promoters of personal virtue and of public morals. For by so much as intelligence is required for the prosecution of any branch of labor, personal self-respect is secured, and the depressing weight of servile drudgery is thrown off; and this, in a degree, has been the effect of labor-saving machinery upon all who are engaged in pursuits requiring manual exertion. Thus, farming as an occupation has now become a scientific profession, if not one of the liberal arts. They who till the soil in old and wasteful ways, and heed not the value of better methods, approved by knowledge and experience, need only reflect upon their own failures to find incentives for entering upon paths which the wise and prudent have long trodden.

Iron is the great civilizer. It is more useful to the world than silver or gold; and it may be questioned whether it is anywhere more radically useful than in a plough. Since agriculture lies at the foundation of all social and national prosperity, that which imparts the chief element of power to agriculture is worthy of the highest measure of appreciation; and, beyond all controversy, the plough is to be reckoned among the greatest of benefactors. Without it, or with it in a rude and imperfect form, the toil of husbandry is a miserable conflict with resisting hardships; but with it, in its perfected form, the earth yields her increase with gladness, and the thorns and the briars of the original curse are exchanged for the waving harvests of the better dispensation.

It was not until so late a period as 1825 that iron mouldboard ploughs came into use in this town, and from that time to this the farmers, in a true sense, have been masters of the soil; at least, so many of them as have learned that, in order to reap well, it is necessary to plough deeply. The bosom of the earth has vast treasures, but they lie beneath and not upon its surface.

The first grass-mower used here was invented by a Mr. Beal, of Spencertown, about thirty years ago. It had a straight scythe, and was, at least, a good experiment in the right direction. Fifteen years since, improved mowers came into use, to be superseded in turn by the light but strong and manageable machines which mingle their sounds over our hill-sides and valleys, in the sweet summer time, with the happy laughter of men who have found how to convert work into play.

But I must pass on to speak of the educational institutions of Claverack. These have been to it an ornament and a defense. Their history furnishes a just reason for indulging in some measure of local pride.

The first high-school established in this county was here. It was named Washington Seminary; was begun in 1777, and successfully founded in 1779, during the progress of the Revolutionary war. Its originator was Rev. Dr. Gebhard, who had privately taught "the sons of some of the best families," and saw the necessity of providing other and larger facilities for conducting instruction in Latin, Greek, and mathematics. Messrs. Dudley Baldwin and Abraham Fonda were the first teachers; the former had charge of the classical, the latter of the English departments; while Dr. Gebhard acted as superintendent, an office which he filled till the close of the seminary.

In 1780, N. Meigs was appointed principal, and served until he was succeeded by Andrew Mayfield Carshore, who had been impressed into the service of the British army and came to this country under General Burgoyne, and after his surrender took charge of a school at Kinderhook, and gave instruction there in the English branches only. Having quit the school just named, he came to Claverack, entered the family of Dr. Gebhard, and there acquired a knowledge of Latin and Greek. He seems to have been a man of unusual genius, aptitude, and culture, and, therefore, Washington Seminary, of which he took the charge, became famous in those days. He continued his connection with it for about twenty-five years, at the end of which the academy at Hudson was built for him, and he removed thither.

While here for nearly a quarter of a century, says Dr. Lewis Gebhard, he taught youth from New-York City, Albany, Poughkeepsie, New-Rochelle, Livingston's Manor, Hudson, and Claverack. At times Washington Seminary had more than one hundred pupils.

Among those who were educated during this period at this seminary were General John P. Van Ness, Attorney-at-Law and Member of Congress; Hon. William P. Van Ness, Judge of the Southern U. S. District; Hon. Cornelius P. Van Ness, Governor of Vermont, Minister to Spain, and Collector of the Port of New-York; General Jacob Rutsen Van Rensselaer, Secretary of State for New-York, often a Member of Congress, and always the poor man's friend. The above were all natives of this town. Martin Van Buren, Robert H. Morris, and many others afterward conspicuous in public life, were also students here. Here, too, the Monells, Jordans, Phillippes, and Millers acquired the beginnings of their education. Claverack has a just right to the honor which these illustrious names confer upon her maternal brow; and she claims them all to-day, while she bids the present generation to emulate and imitate the virtues of the great men she has reared.

Under the operation of a State law, the Washington Seminary was at length merged into a common school. The building stood, and still stands directly north of the railroad depot. There are some now present who were school-boys, and some of them are pleased to recite reminiscences which, while they amuse, do not, perhaps, belong to the sober truth of history.

The decline of the original seminary incited the Rev. Mr. Sluyter to

take measures for the erection of an academy, which, in all its proportions, should meet the wants of this region. After much effort his plans were accomplished. The Claverack Academy was erected and opened in 1830. It had a board of eighteen trustees, of whom only the following survive, namely, Stephen Storm and John G. Gebhard, M.D. The structure was built by Colonel Ambrose Root, and the first principal was the Rev. John Mabon, a learned man and an able instructor. He had, while here, under his care, several pupils who afterward rose to eminence in the various departments of life.

In 1854, the Claverack Academy and Hudson River Institute was opened. Addresses on the occasion were delivered by Rev. Isaac Ferris, D.D., Horace Greeley, and Rev. Elbert S. Porter. Its first president was Rev. Ira. C. Boice, and its lessee, from the beginning, Rev. Alonzo Flack, who, acting with the trustees, has successfully aimed to render this one of the very best institutions of the kind in the State.

To Mr. Boice is due the honor of having conceived and defined the idea of a large institution having collegiate proportions. He found intelligent friends and helpers in Mr. Peter Hoffman, Frederick Mesick, and some others, through whose exertions the Hudson River Institute was reared. Thus it is seen that the chief friends and promoters of education in this town have been the successive pastors of this church. Admirable as their record is in the ecclesiastical page, their names shine equally bright among those who have been benefactors of the general community. Let it not be forgotten that Gebhard, Sluyter, and Boice have stamped the impress of their generous lives upon your entire educational history; and surely the town, as such, has no other history of equal value.

As a portion—and a most notable portion—of the history of this town, it should be mentioned that there are now residing, for the most part, within the town and within the bounds of this congregation, a large number of persons who have lived to be eighty years old and upward. The following are their names with their ages: Helena Coens, 94; David Crego, Sen., 93; Mathias Emerick, 92; Mrs. Helena Emerick, 82; Mrs. Hannah Ten Brock, 87; Mrs. Maria Fryenmout, 87; James Studley, 90; Jacob Whitbeck, 83; Mrs. Hannah Pincher, 86; Mrs. Abraham T. Van Dusen, 81; Mrs. Ann Myer, 84; Mrs. Rachel Milham, 83; Ezra Doane, 85; Mrs. Doane, 81; Mrs. Jane Skinkle, 84; Tunis Snyder, 86; Cornelius Ostrander, 80; Stephen Storm, 85; George Stufflebeem, 84; Christina Stickles, 84; Mrs. Mary Bennet, 83; Mrs. Cornelia Porter, 81; John Holsopple, 82; Sophia Gifford, 84; John Wagner, 81; Adam Wagner, 87; Mary Beneway, 82; Mrs. Mary Pitcher, 86; Mrs. Elizabeth Ostrander, 81; George Hanne, 84.

Here are the names of just thirty persons, whose united ages make the sum total of 2542 years—an average of very nearly 85 years. The fact of the longevity of so large a number might be supplemented by mentioning the names of another large number of your townspeople who have reached the age of seventy-five years and upward, and of some who are now in their eightieth year. The very figures amaze us! How much more would

we be impressed could we read the experiences and know the life-histories of all these venerable men and women who yet abide with us, only waiting till the shadows are a little longer grown!

Imperfect as the record is which I have recited in your hearing, still it may serve to awaken gratitude to Him who hath cast your lot in pleasant places and given you a goodly heritage. Let it be remembered, however, that children have no honor who do not strive to add to the honor of their forefathers. Vain would be all the labor of this day, should we who speak fail to impress the lesson that pride of ancestry and boasted privileges only insure infamy complete, where there is no spirit of gratitude and no heroism of purpose to make the future brighter than the past hath been.

Among all the names which have been recited this day with respect, none have been heard with so much of fondness as the names of men who lived not for themselves alone, for paltry gains, or petty pleasures, but for the good of others. There is no such thing as a legacy of personal merit.

“They who take it  
By inheritance alone, are like stars  
Seen in the ocean, which were never there  
But for their bright originals in heaven.”

In conclusion, there are a few personal recollections which I shall take the liberty of mentioning.

Twenty-five years ago, when only about old enough to cast the vote permitted to manhood, I became a resident of this county. From the first I learned to love it. I have ridden over its hills, climbed its mountains and wandered by its streams until they have become almost a part of my very being. For thirteen years, I have resided among you in the summer time, sharing all the while your kindness and neighborly regard. Beneath an old oak in this burial-ground lie the remains of my sainted mother, and there, I trust, my own will rest when work is done and service ends in rest. I feel, therefore, that I am one of you, and in all that concerns your welfare, happiness, and prosperity, I am concerned. No stranger's heart, therefore, has been speaking to you; and, because in all your weal or woe I must find delight or sorrow, let me say from the top of this century to which we have climbed, that, after all, life is vanity, unless it be sanctified in Christ, to virtue, truth, and heaven.

ADDRESSES

IN THE

GROVE AND CHURCH.





## ADDRESSES IN THE GROVE.

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HON. HENRY HOGEBOOM, Judge of the Supreme Court of the State, and resident at Hudson, was called to the chair. He opened the meeting with some interesting remarks, giving many pleasant reminiscences of his earlier days and professional labors in the county. He then gave, in his eloquent, genial, and impressive way, some reminiscences of the clergy of the county as he saw them in his youth. He spoke of Rev. Dr. Sickles, James Romeyn, Peter S. Wynkoop, Quitman, Fonda, Wackerhagen, and others.

### ADDRESS OF J. SOUTHARD VAN WYCK, ESQ.

After the able, the instructive, and the eloquent addresses made by the speakers of the day, I do not know that I can say any thing that will contribute to the interest of the occasion. Being called upon, however, to make a few remarks, and *not* expecting to be present at the next centennial of our church for *certain reasons* which we all appreciate and feel the force of, I could not well do less than respond. But I accept it rather as a compliment to myself, than as indicating a purpose on your part to have further light on the history of our church and town. I listened with the utmost satisfaction to the addresses of our church and town historians, and we all feel that they ably treated the subjects presented; and while listening to them I was almost persuaded to believe that the old town of Claverack was the heart of America—the very Eden of the world. Some of you may think this *rather* extravagant; but, be it as it may, I can truly say that I love the dear old town of Claverack, and every foot of its soil is sacred to me.

To us who are the descendants of the first settlers of Claverack, the descendants of the founders or builders of this ancient edifice, whose spire for ages has pointed heavenward, this occasion is a delightful one and fraught with much interest. In this church our ancestors communed with their God, and the places they once filled with so much credit and honor to themselves we are now permitted to occupy. In fact, all the associations of our town and church are to us hallowed and dear; they all remind us of our forefathers. When I go in yonder church or look upon its ancient walls, I am reminded of my ancestors, who there, in days gone by, and year after year, like the patriarchs of old, went up to the weekly worship of the Lord. When I look at the location of this church—the green lawn in front, the gentle slopes on either side, and this woodland back of it—I am reminded of their good judgment and their appreciation of the beautiful; for never—*never* within the memory of man was a church edifice more delight-

fully located. When I ask myself where is their last resting-place, I have to take but a short walk from my old home to find myself beside the humble graves of one of my great-grandfathers' grandfather and many of his descendants. When I think of this graveyard—this city of the dead, or walk among its many mounds, I am reminded of the deceased relatives and friends whose bodies were there consigned to mother earth. So with all of us—the descendants of these early settlers of Claverack, these founders of our old Dutch church; their memories are precious to us, and all the associations connected with our town and church will ever keep those memories green and fresh. However humble may have been the birth, or retiring and unpretending the lives of these good old burghers of Claverack, we are still proud to proclaim to the world that they were our ancestors, because, while they may not have been of blood royal, their lives tell us that they were men in the truest sense of the word—that they were nature's noblemen.

The allotted time of five minutes for each of us speakers in the grove will not permit me to extend my remarks, yet I can not refrain from adding that it affords me much pleasure, and that I esteem it a great privilege to celebrate with you the first centennial of our church and pay this tribute of respect to the memory of men and women in whose praise too much can not be said. But where are they now? Gone, gone, gone, never to return; they are numbered among the dead. Not one of those living in 1767, when the corner-stone of this edifice was laid, now survives. We have to rely upon history and tradition for our knowledge of them. This tells us that man is mortal; this tells us in unmistakable language that not even the youngest of us present to-day, in the natural course of things—no, not even the fair babe whose eyes for the first are now taking in the sunlight of heaven—will be living in 1967 to celebrate the second centennial of our *good old Reformed Protestant Dutch Church*.

Then let us so live that we may hereafter be numbered among the redeemed in heaven; let us live like honest Christian men and women, whatever be our condition in life, that posterity, that our descendants, in celebrating other and future centennials of our church, may be able to pay as high a tribute of respect to our memories as we in truth are able to pay to the memories of our once venerable ancestors who are now no more.

John Gaul, Jr., of Hudson, also a native of the town, and a lawyer of eminence, spoke in cordial and earnest praise of the Holland blood and name, and commented upon the precious influence which the descendants of the Netherlands had exerted upon the affairs of church and state.

Hon. Judge John C. Newkirk, of Hudson, next addressed the meeting. While he gave honor to his ancestors of Holland origin, and praised the excellences of the church in which he was born, baptized, and reared, still he was convinced that it was not the office of a church to preach the Gospel for people of one nationality, and therefore he was in favor of the grand old historic name *Reformed*, which the church of his forefathers brought

to this country. His remarks on that point were received with *much* demonstration of warm approval on the part of the audience.

Peter Van Buren, M.D., an elder in the Twenty-third Street Church, New-York, and a direct descendant of Dominie Fryenmout, was next introduced, and spoke with feeling and effect. He said he was glad to be in his native county again and participate in this great memorial occasion. He felt happy in hearing the past described, and shared a personal interest in all its treasured recollections. He was Dutch by blood, education, and association, and loving as he did the church of his forefathers, he wanted to see it advance under its rightful name, *Reformed*.

#### REMARKS OF HON. THEODORE MILLER.

MR. PRESIDENT: In accepting the invitation of your Committee to be present upon this interesting occasion, it was my intention to remain a silent listener to the proceedings which this event has inaugurated. I feel, however, that it is not inappropriate for me, whose associations have been so intimately identified with those who have been closely connected with this sacred edifice, whose centennial anniversary we this day commemorate, and with this old town, honored as it is by its past history, to submit a few remarks.

It is not my good fortune to be a native of this town; but I am allied to it by ties as strong and indissoluble as if I had been born within its limits. And although not one of you, yet it seems to me as if there was no other spot on earth to which I am more strongly attached and with which I am more intimately connected.

It was here that my ancestors, on my father's side, for several generations were born, and in yonder cemetery repose the remains of many endeared to me by the closest ties of kindred and of blood. And with the exception of my father, who removed to the city of Hudson to practice his profession at an early period of his life, and remained until his decease, in 1822, here they resided during their whole lives, to advanced old age, and here they died.

According to family tradition, my grandfather and grandmother were, at a very early age, connected with this church, and each took an active part in sustaining it until the times of their respective deaths. The former, if I am rightly informed, was for many years one of its most efficient supporters and active members. It has ever seemed to me almost like my own church, for under its ministrations my ancestors lived and died, and were instructed in spiritual matters. The name of the Rev. John Gebhard, one of its earliest pastors, and of his successor, the Rev. Richard Sluyter, are as familiar to me as household words, and, connected as they are with the history of this old church, will ever live in my memory. The old church on the hill, with its fine and beautiful location, its tall and stately trees, the tombstones to the memory of the departed, some of which stand within its shadow, have always occupied a prominent place in my recollection.

There it has stood for a century, with its spire pointing to heaven, seeming almost proud in its power and strength, extending through its de-

voted pastors a salutary religious influence over all within its reach, and promoting the welfare, happiness, and salvation of the community within which it has been located. How many have first received the light of religious truth within the walls of that edifice? How many have been borne to the tomb within the sound of its tolling bell, and received the last solemn rites of religion at the hands of those who have ministered at its altar, some of whom have long since departed to "the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveler returns."

In yonder churchyard sleep the men of the past, identified with this church and this locality. There repose in quiet the remains of one of Columbia's most gifted and distinguished sons, William W. Van Ness, a man of giant intellect, who ranked first and foremost among the great men of the nation.

There stands the old church, almost as it was one hundred years ago, grand in its majesty, sacred beauty, and loveliness, a living monument of the past to us and to future generations of the first growth of the denomination it represents and of the religious feelings of our ancestors at this early period of our history. It speaks to us to-day in trumpet tones, and it will speak to future generations as they arise and gather around the altar within its hallowed walls, of truth, of religion, and of immortality.

My earliest childhood is connected with this place and its surroundings. It was here that I frequently came to visit my relatives and friends while a mere boy, and the events of this period of life never fail to leave a lasting impression upon the mind. It appears to me like my own home, and I never return to it but with feelings of joy and the highest gratification.

There is much, too, Mr. President, in this good old town to awaken the liveliest sensations. It had considerable to do with our early struggles for independence, and its soil reëchoed with the tramp of some portion of the army who fought and bled for, and who won, our liberties.

From here emanated many of the soldiers who were engaged in that great contest. I am proud to say that my grandfather, although young in years, had some little to do with that eventful struggle. And let us not forget that here too stood the old courthouse, now an elegant private residence, where for twenty years gathered the legal talent of the State—where Hamilton, Spencer, Van Ness, and others, the giants of the legal profession of that day, were wont to exhibit their superior talents, skill, and learning in the trial of causes and in solving the knotty problems of the law. It was here that Dr. Crosswell was tried before Chief-Justice Lewis, in 1803, upon an indictment for a libel upon President Jefferson, and found guilty. The case involved the question whether the truth could be given in evidence, and upon a review of the proceedings before the Supreme Court, the Judges were equally divided in opinion. The Legislature passed a declaratory act settling the law, in consequence of which a new trial was awarded.

I trust that I may be permitted to remark that there is no town in the county which has contributed more to the eminent and distinguished men who have adorned the annals of the State and nation than the town of Claverack. It was the birthplace of William H. Van Ness, Jacob Rutten



Van Rensselaer, Joseph D. Monell, Killian Miller, Dr. William Bay and his two brothers, Thomas and Herman Bay, of the Gebhards, and others now no more, who have left a record which will not suffer in comparison with any other names which this noble county has produced.

From this town also have originated many who are still living and engaged in active life who have done it much honor. I believe that a considerable portion of the members of the bar in Hudson either were born here or can trace their ancestry from some of the noblest sons of Claverack.

I have alluded mainly to the past and to some of the old reminiscences which this occasion is so well calculated to awaken. What shall I say of the present? The improvements which have been made in almost every locality have been singularly marked and apparent. Nearly every farm and every farm-house bears evidence of culture, taste, and progress. The old church itself has been made to conform to the requirements of the age, and it has planted its branches in different directions, to meet the wants and wishes of the community. And here, in our very midst, has arisen, as it were by magic, an academic institution of large proportions, dispensing its blessings far and wide, and extending the benefits of education in the higher branches to the door of every one who desire them. Originated by the enlightened and liberal-minded men of this town, by the aid of a talented, energetic, and sagacious principal,\* who I regret to find is not here to participate with us upon this joyous occasion—and an able corps of professors, it has become one of the necessary institutions of the country.

Nothing contributes more to the elevation and refinement of a community than a seat of learning, and he who conducts such an enterprise successfully is entitled to the warmest thanks of the public. The gentleman to whom I have alluded, who has had the main charge of this institution, has my best wishes for his happiness and prosperity, and for his safe return to the home which he has temporarily left and which he has contributed so much to benefit, to beautify, and adorn.

Time admonishes me that these desultory remarks should be brought to a close. In conclusion, I can only express my fervent wishes that this venerable temple of the living God, endeared to us by so many recollections of the past, by the blessings of heaven, under the charge of the distinguished divine who now presides over it, and his successors, may continue as useful and as prosperous in the future as it has been in the past.

Hon. Peter S. Danforth, of Schoharie county, made the final address. It was well conceived and well expressed. He brought the congratulations of old Schoharie to the people of old Claverack, and felt happy in being able to participate in the exercises of an occasion so fruitful in its memories, so grateful in its suggestions concerning the future. He claimed to have as warm an attachment to the church of his choice as any other person, but his love for it compelled him to desire its extension, and he therefore gave his hearty support to the movements now in progress to secure its enlargement. After the meeting in the grove the people again repaired to the church.

\* Rev. Alonzo Flack,

## ADDRESSES IN THE CHURCH.

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ADDRESS BY REV. IRA C. BOICE.

MY FRIENDS: It gives me great pleasure to be present with you on this centennial anniversary. I feel very much at home in this place and with these surroundings. The old familiar faces upon which I am permitted to look to-day make me feel that I am no stranger here, nor in a strange land. This old church, though with her new dress on to-day, has to me a home-like appearance, and wears the aspect of an old friend. Yea, as I entered your pleasant village, a day or two since, it caused quite an effort to convince me and make me realize that I was not returning to my home. Though it is now about eight years since I resigned the charge of this flock, yet there are not a few in this assembly whom I recognize as the sheep and the lambs of this fold, and who in turn will recognize the well-known, the familiar voice of the under shepherd who was wont in former times to lead them into the green pastures of gospel truth and by the still waters of the Spirit's influence. *The very ground* upon which I tread as I walk your streets, the houses upon which I look, (whose *latch-string* always hung out to me,) and the very trees, though with somewhat extended branches and enlarged trunks, each and all wear to me a domestic appearance. And well they may, for upon this ground I walked for fifteen years, and some of these houses I saw reared, and not a few of these trees I planted and pruned, and they are to-day holding up their fruit and extending their *umbageous, arm-like* branches as if to welcome and embrace an old friend. Yea, the whistling wind through these noble old oaks, the birds which warble in their branches, the murmuring brook by your village side, and the hearty greetings I receive on meeting you, *each* and *all* awaken a remembrance of fondly cherished friendships. But I pause and ask your indulgence for these outgushings of a full heart. As I look upon this large congregation, old familiar faces I miss upon which I loved to look, for their faces were but indexes of their *warm, loving* hearts. In the flesh I know I shall see them no more, for death has been here. The office-bearer, the father, the mother, the husband or wife, and the blooming youth are gone. They sleep their last sleep. "Lover and friend thou hast put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." Some whom I miss I have reason to believe have made a good exchange, for "for them to live was Christ, and to die was gain," and as they closed their eyes upon all earthly scenes, they were enabled to say: "I am now ready to be offered,

and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the righteous Judge shall give me at that day." And now they sing:

"I have found the joy of heaven,  
I am one of the angel band,  
To my head a crown is given,  
And a harp is in my hand;  
I have learned the song they sing  
Whom Jesus hath made free,  
And the glorious walls of heaven still ring  
With my new-born melody.

"No sin, no grief, no pain,  
Safe in my happy home;  
My fears all fled, my doubts all slain,  
My hour of triumph come;  
O friends of my mortal years,  
The trusted and the true!  
Ye're walking still in the valley of tears,  
But I wait to welcome you.

"Do I forget? oh! no;  
For memory's golden chain  
Shall bind my heart to the hearts below  
Till they meet and touch again:  
Each link is strong and bright,  
And love's electric flame  
Flows freely down like a river of light  
To the world from whence I came."

And though the ranks of the faithful soldiers may have been thinned, yet your number of church membership has not been lessened. New recruits have been gathered in, and have buckled on the gospel armor, and are ready for the conflict, and to such we say:

"In thine armor fearless stand,  
Girded by Jehovah's hand,  
Till within the promised land  
He shall set thee free."

You know not, my friends, how my heart rejoiced when I read in the organ of our Church of the revival of religion with which God had blessed you, and of the goodly number gathered into the communion of this church. If it had been a revival in my own present charge, and an ingathering of souls there, it could scarcely have rejoiced my heart more. And I know, my friends, that you are ready to unite with me and say: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name, and forget not all his benefits!" I *congratulate* you to-day, while God is smiling upon

you and giving you tokens of his presence and spiritual prosperity, and for the long-continued providence that has watched over this church. God has blessed you in giving you a faithful pastor. His labors have been abundantly blessed, and many souls have been given him as seals of his ministry. He is still permitted to stand upon these walls as the accredited ambassador of Christ, beseeching you in his stead to be reconciled to God. May his life be long spared and his usefulness be unending. Next to your spiritual growth, I rejoice to behold your apparent temporal prosperity, for I have always considered the outward appearance of the church, of the parsonage, and the condition of the church property in general, together with the minister's salary, promptly or not promptly paid, a good index of the state of the heart of the congregation. Never shall I forget the impression made upon my mind on my first visit to your village. The dilapidated state of the church and parsonage, the apparent neglect, and a want of interest was everywhere manifest, and admonished me of much hard work to be done. Now, this state of things we have reason to believe was owing, in a great degree, to the declining health of my esteemed predecessor, the *now sainted Sluyter*. During the last few years of his ministry, being warned by the nature of his disease of his speedy departure from his active field of labor, his time and remaining strength was given to prepare for his rest and in winning souls for Christ. "He rests from his labors, and his works do follow him." But I am free to add, no sooner was the call made to arise and build, than many coadjutors rallied around me, and the work was done, and this Zion and her parsonage became the praise and admiration of all. And as I look around me to-day and out upon these grounds, I see much to praise and commend. In conclusion, let me exhort you not to cease, but "walk about this Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following." And may God grant that by these centennial exercises to-day may be erected an Ebenezer, inscribed, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us," which shall stand as a memorial of the long-continued goodness of the Lord, and tell our children and our children's children "what God has wrought." And while life continues and I am permitted to live in the flesh, *this old church and her best interests* will be near to my heart and shall share in my unworthy petitions. Men, brothers, and fathers, "*pray* for the peace of (this) Jerusalem, for they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee."

#### ADDRESS OF REV. A. P. VAN GIESON.

Rev. Mr. Van Gieson spoke substantially as follows:

The brother who has just spoken has set an excellent example, which it will be well for those who follow him to imitate. His address has been brief. Mine will probably be still more brief, for interesting and delightful



as these exercises are to us all, I can not but remember that human patience, like every thing else human, is finite, and may be exhausted. Moreover, I can not but feel that personally, I stand before you at somewhat of a disadvantage. The interest of to-day is divided between the old and the new. On the one hand are the old fathers, long since dead and gone, and these old walls, builded by their pious toil, and the old gray-headed men still living, who recount the events and describe the scenes of the olden times; and on the other hand are these new adornments recently added, and in their fresh beauty bearing such eloquent testimony to the children's filial regard for the holy house in which their fathers worshiped, and these new faces of brethren from abroad, whose presence is more or less unfamiliar. But I know not in which of these categories to place myself. To this congregation my presence is not new enough to be attractive as a novelty, and I am not quite old enough yet to be interesting as an antiquity. I have the misfortune to stand just midway, at the point most of all devoid of interest, and, bearing this in mind, will detain you but a very short time.

In the matter of antiquities I have but one item to add to the sum already contributed. You see this venerable-looking book which I hold in my hand. It is parchment bound; the covers are secured by leather thongs; the paper has become yellow, and the ink has faded through lapse of years. The handwriting is in an antique character, and in the old Dutch language. This book contains the oldest records extant of the Claverack church. On the second leaf is a copy of the call extended to the first minister of the church, Dominie Patrus Van Driessen; and incorporated with that call we find a short historical sketch, to which, as far as I can recollect, no speaker on this occasion has alluded. This ancient record states that in the beginning the people of this neighborhood were dependent for public divine service upon ministers from Albany. It farther informs us that the people of Claverack, out of regard for the aged and infirm, the women and children; and because they thought it unbecoming a Christian people to neglect their Christian duty; and also through the prompting (or as the Dutch has it, the *upwaking*) of the Patroon Hendrick Van Rensselaer, did, in the year 1719, unite in an effort to build a church and secure services of a settled minister for themselves. The record adds, that, on account of their sins, God was not pleased to crown the effort with success; and it was not until the year 1727 that the desire of their hearts was realized, in the settlement of Dominie Van Driessen, the building of a house of worship, and the complete and efficient organization of the church.

Now this record is exceedingly interesting on many accounts. In the first place it shows us very clearly what manner of men our forefathers were. It brings out in strong relief some of the noblest and most striking traits of their character. They were conscientious, God-fearing, church-loving men; for they thought it a Christian duty to secure the stated means of grace, and felt that the neglect of that duty would be unbecoming to them as a Christian people. They were humble men, deeply penetrated with a



sense of their unworthiness before God ; for they confess that their failure at the outset was but the just recompense for their sins. They were considerate and tender-hearted men ; for they tell us with touching simplicity that they had special regard for the aged and infirm, and the women and children. The old proverbial Dutch perseverance is also strikingly manifested ; for, failing at the start, they still kept to their purpose, and after an interval of eight years tried again. And yet with the perseverance is also a hinting at Dutch slowness ; for it seems that they needed a little waking up from the Patroon.

This record also throws some additional light upon the question concerning the date of the church organization. The document is drawn up in the name of the Consistory, and has appended to it the signatures of all the members of the Consistory, and its whole tenor is such as to establish a probability, amounting almost to a certainty, that there was a regularly organized Consistory at least as far back as 1719.

This is the only positive contribution I have to make to the collection of antiquities. I will detain you a few moments longer, while I take the liberty of calling in question the genuineness of one or two contributions made this morning. If I remember rightly, Brother Zabriskie informed us that the more ancient portion of this church edifice is built of bricks brought from Holland ; and Dr. Porter also claimed that there is a dwelling-house somewhere in the neighborhood, likewise built of bricks brought across the sea more than a century ago. With all due deference to the opinions of these esteemed brethren, I can not but think that, on this point, they are mistaken. I do not believe that there is a single brick from Holland in this church, and although some of our more ancient dwelling-houses can still show some Holland tiles or bricks in their hearths and chimney-pieces, I do not believe that there is a single house built of such brick anywhere in the neighborhood. Appearances are altogether against such a supposition. There are the bricks in the church walls now, and any one, by simply looking at them, can see that they look just like those made in this country, and we know that, according to all descriptions given, the Holland bricks were quite different in size and shape, and even in color and texture. Moreover, it is certain that bricks were made in this region before the church was built, and the question naturally arises, why should our forefathers, who were never wanting in thrift and good sense, import such cumbersome material, at increased expenses, from beyond the sea, when it was to be had in any quantity desired at their own doors ?

But it may be said that there is a vague tradition afloat about the bricks being brought from Holland. Well, my friends, such traditions have to be received with many grains of allowance. While we were in the grove, a short time ago, a friend told me of a Dutch family that had an old ox-sled on their farm, which, year by year, grew older and more dilapidated and venerable, until at last, somehow, there sprang up a tradition in the family that the ox-sled was brought from Holland, although every stick of timber in it was evidently of American growth. The tradition about the bricks

is most probably of this ox-sled variety, and might very properly be suspected, even if there were no opposing testimony. But in this case there is such testimony. During my pastorate here I sought information on this very point from several of the older inhabitants, and all who professed to know any thing about the matter averred that the bricks of the church were made on a neighboring farm. They pointed out the field in which the bricks were burned, and if you will go to the owner of that field to-day, he will tell you that it is still known as "The Brick-Kiln Lot." This, it seems to me, renders the theory of Hollandish origin utterly untenable.

I have said thus much, not because there is any gratification in dispelling a pleasing illusion, nor because I wish to detract from the credit of Holland. Holland, as we all know, is a country which, in its day, has had no inconsiderable notoriety, and by us certainly will always be spoken of with respect. But to-day we are in Claverack, and will give to old Claverack all the credit which belongs to her. Holland has no need to borrow or filch from her, because Holland has enough credit of her own. For the honor of Claverack then, as well as the sake of the truth, I must aver my belief that this church is in the full sense of the term the Church of Claverack; that it was built by her sons; and that every brick in the ancient walls, from the foundation to the roof, was taken from her soil.

Mr. Van Gieson closed with a few sentences expressive of his abiding affection for the church, and his desire and prayer for its continued prosperity.

#### ADDRESS OF REV. MR. SEBRING.

Rev. Mr. Sebring, of Mellenville, said: The corner-stone of our house of worship was laid July 4th, 1838. It was dedicated to the worship of God December 13th, 1838. The church was organized December 24th, 1838, under the title of *The Second Reformed Dutch Church of Claverack, in Mellenville*. It was composed of ninety-one members from the R. D. Church of Claverack, sixteen from the R. D. Church of Hillsdale, three from the R. D. Church of Ghent, and two from the R. D. Church of Kinderhook. From the date of dedication to October 18th, 1842, the pulpit was supplied on Sabbath afternoons, alternately, by Rev. Richard Sluyter and Rev. Peter S. Wynkoop, when Rev. John C. Vandervoort was installed pastor, who remained until the winter of 1845. The Rev. John S. Himrod was installed pastor March 25th, 1845, and remained until 1851; Rev. John H. Pitcher was installed pastor January 28th, 1852, and remained until 1861. The present pastor was installed October 22d, 1862.

#### ADDRESS OF REV. J. B. DRURY.

The First Reformed Dutch Church of Ghent, (formerly Squampamack,) originated only eight years after the erection of the Claverack church. The rebuilding of the parent church seems to have animated the members of the north-eastern part of the congregation to undertake the erection of a "meet-

ing-house" in their own neighborhood, which undertaking would appear to have been accomplished during the year 1774. In the spring of 1775—just as the first guns of the Revolutionary struggle were being fired—the Dutch settlers on Squampamack Flats met in their new meeting-house to organize themselves into a church by electing their first Consistory.

The old church book, bound in vellum, and of stamped paper, (having the seals of Great Britain and of King George in water-mark,) is yet in a good state of preservation. The title-page reads: "Allgemeen Kerkenboek dei Nederduitichen Gereformeerden Geweente Jesu Christi, of Squampamack, begonnen Ao. 1775, f. 28. Maert."

It further quotes the apostolic injunction, which the book itself illustrates, "Let all things be done decently and in order." 1 Cor. 14 : 40. And states that, on the 18th, "The first Consistory was installed, and the first sermon preached in the new church, by Doct. Do. Gerhard Daniel Cock." The text was, Apoc. 3 : 18, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

The Consistory were: Elders—Zijur Ver Kooren, Zacharias Kernreich, Lauwrentz Hogeboom; Deacons—Omphy Moor, Johannes Hogeboom, Junior.

On the same day, March 18th, 1775, in the presence of Dr. Cock, "preacher in the camp and at Rhinebeck," the consistory of the church of Claverack, viz., Elders, Johannes Holsappel, Wilhelm V. Aolsteen, Johan Adam Schmit, Richard Ysselsteen; Deacons, Matthew Hallenbeck, Jonas Schenkel, Jeremias Johannes Muller, met with Zacharias Kernreich, Lauwrence Hogeboom, Johannes Hogeboom, Junior, and Johannes Moedt, of the "new congregation," and agreed upon certain articles regulating the relation of the churches to each other. Subsequent to this there appears upon the record a call, bearing date Oct. 17th, 1782, upon the Rev. Do. Johannes Gabriel Gebhard, to preach and administer the sacraments in the church of Squampamack, in connection with his duties in Claverack, for which he is promised the sum of £20, New-York money. The call is signed by Lauwrence Hogeboom, Elder, and John Hogeboom, Deacon.

The only further record in respect to this old organization is the installation, by Rev. Dominie Burke, preacher in Schodack, of a consistory, June 25th, 1801. The names of this Consistory were: Elders—John Hogeboom and Philip Dunsbagh; Deacons—William P. Link and Jacob Loop.

In connection with this organization there were baptized from 1775 to 1816, about three hundred infants; and from 1775 to 1790, the date of the last record under this head, forty-six were received into the communion of the church.

The present church edifice was erected in 1816. It was built upon the site of the old church, by the conjoined efforts of the Reformed and Lutheran congregations. The church was dedicated to the service of God early in the spring of 1817. Opening prayer was made by Rev. Mr. Wackerhagen,

German Lutheran minister; sermon preached by Rev. Mr. Quitman, Lutheran minister at Red Hook, from Psalm 133 : 1, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The Rev. Mr. Sickles, pastor of Reformed Church of Kinderhook, made the dedicatory prayer.

In April, 1819, a petition was prepared, and, in May, presented with ninety-four signatures to the Classis of Rensselaer, asking for the organization of a church. The request was granted, and May 4th, 1819, the church was organized, with William P. Link and Tunis J. Snyder as elders, and John Jacobie, Junior, and George A. Shufelt as deacons, and received under the care of Classis.

Considerable time elapsed before the new organization felt itself in a condition to call a pastor, owing to a refusal of the Consistories of the Kinderhook and Claverack churches to dismiss to the new church many who desired to connect with it. The matter was several times before Classis, but was not decided until September 23d, 1822, when Classis fixed the boundaries of the new church. Very soon after the settlement of this difficulty, a call was made upon the Rev. Peter S. Wynkoop, which was approved by Classis Nov. 26th, 1822, and he installed Jan. 9th, 1823. His pastorate extended over a period of twenty years. In 1822, the number of communicants was one hundred and thirty-five. In the winter of 1838-9, there was quite an extensive revival; and the next spring the number of communicants reported was two hundred and twenty-five. A revision of this list in 1841 reduced the number to one hundred and fifty-four. In 1838, the Mellenville (Second Claverack) church was organized, and took several families, and a few members, from the church of Ghent.

In 1843, the church of Second or West-Ghent was organized almost exclusively out of the parent church. Early in the same year the church of Chat-ham was begun, and subsequently took a number of families and members.

In the summer of 1843, Rev. P. S. Wynkoop resigned his call, and terminated his long and useful pastorate there.

April 3d, 1845, Rev. John De Witt was called, and continued as pastor until the fall of 1848. During his pastorate the exclusive use of the church building was secured, by purchase of the Lutherans' interest.

Rev. John Gray was called Sept. 18th, 1848; his ministry embraced seven years, closing Nov. 5th, 1855. He was followed by Rev. W. W. Letson, whose call bears date April 15th, 1856. He was succeeded by the present pastor in 1864.

The church edifice has been recently repaired, both within and without; and though the church has never regained the strength it lost by the organization of contiguous churches, it is yet a daughter which it need not shame the mother church of Claverack to own as her eldest.



## REV. E. N. SEBRING.

The following statement was made by Mr. Sebring :

At a meeting of the Classis of Rensselaer in the Church of Claverack, April 18th, 1843, a petition was presented, asking for the organization of a church in the western part of the town of Ghent. The prayer was granted, and on the 15th day of May a Consistory was chosen, the Rev. Dr. Gosman presiding at the appointment of Classis. The church, as then organized, bears the name of the Second Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of Ghent.

The corner-stone was laid on the 14th of June by the Rev. Dr. Gosman, and on the 15th the certificate of organization was acknowledged before Darius Peck, Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the county of Columbia, and filed and recorded the same day.

The Rev. T. F. Wyckoff was ordained to the Gospel ministry and installed pastor of said church on the 12th day of July, 1843. Sermon preached by his father, Rev. Dr. I. N. Wyckoff, of Albany. Charge to the minister by Rev. Dr. Gosman. Charge to people by Rev. Mr. Porter, of Chatham. Preached his farewell sermon on the 4th day of August, 1844.

Rev. George R. Williamson was ordained and installed pastor on the 16th day of October, 1843. Sermon by Rev. George H. Fisher, of New-York. Charge to pastor, Rev. Ira C. Boice. Charge to people by Rev. B. Van Zandt. Continued pastor about three years. Called to Church of Amity, New-York. Perished on board the Reindeer, September, 1852.

Rev. J. C. Van der Wort entered upon his labors on the last Sabbath of April, 1848, and was installed on the 19th of May succeeding—Rev. Edwin Holmes, of Nassau, preaching the sermon. Continued his labors until the fall of 1850, when he was called home.

Rev. Jacob H. Van Wort was installed pastor of this church October 12th, 1852, and closed his ministry in July, 1865.

Rev. Elbert N. Sebring, ordained and installed November 15th, 1865. Sermon by Rev. E. A. Collier, of Kinderhook. Charge to the pastor by Rev. A. I. Sebring, of Mellenville. Charge to people by Rev. Isaac L. Kip, of Stuyvesant Falls.

## REV. J. S. HIMROD

Said: The church of Greenport sends Christian salutation, and congratulates her foster-mother on rounding up a period of a century with such a brilliant history.

The daughter deems this a proper occasion on which to express her gratitude for maternal kindness, prayers, counsels, and contributions.

The church of Greenport was organized in the year 1836. She held a



collegiate bond with the church of Linlithgow until 1848, when the Rev. Polhemus Van Wyck was ordained and installed as pastor. The Rev. Jacob N. Voorhies succeeded him in 1851. The Rev. H. W. Finch became the pastor of the church in the year 1857. He was followed by the present pastor in the year 1861. The church is small but not feeble—possessing the means of grace and self-sustaining.

Among the many traditions presented here this day, which now have become written history, is one of the people of Greenport. It runs thus: "Thomas Decker presented and drew the first stick of timber for this edifice." The donor then lived, and when old died, near by the site of the church in Greenport. His descendants were from the first, and still are, a constituent portion of our church and congregation.

Our church edifice has well-nigh served its day and generation. A new house, in some acceptance of the term, is manifest destiny for us; and, doubtless, if the mother church desires it, she will be favored with the privilege of bearing a distinguished part in that enterprise.

#### ADDRESS OF REV. JOHN McCLELLAN HOLMES.

The charm of these delightful services is closely connected with the fact that this is a family gathering. We meet at this centenary festival as members of the same original household, our veins tingling with the same life-blood, and our souls swelling with the same kindred affection. We who are descended from this mother church come back to-day to greet her in her old age, and to congratulate her upon the fact that her eye is not dimmed nor her natural force abated. And as we gaze upon her, venerable with years and doubly venerable because of her lifelong devotion to Christ, we can not but be proud of our ecclesiastical lineage. Nor, if I mistake not, is this goodly mother a whit the less inclined to boast of her returning children. On the contrary, while she glories in this venerable sanctuary and in the precious memories which cluster around it, yet, feeling the sentiment and borrowing the language of the Roman mother, she points to her children and exclaims, "These are my jewels!" It is pleasant thus to enjoy a family reunion in the courts of the Lord. How can it fail to remind us of that more glorious gathering in the upper sanctuary!

Of the church which I represent to-day, it can scarcely be necessary for me to speak at length. Its history is so familiar to all within the sound of my voice, that I need not recite it here. The original settlement of Hudson, or, as it was first called, Claverack Landing, was composed chiefly of Quakers, from Providence and Nantucket. These persons brought with them their peculiar religious views, and until 1790 the only church in Hudson was connected with the Society of Friends. In that year the Presbyterian church was organized, and into it all who held the common faith of the Presbyterians and Reformed entered, dwelling together in unity and laboring jointly for the cause of their common Master. In the summer of 1835, however, a few individuals connected with the Presbyterian church

of Hudson, who had been reared in the Reformed Dutch Church, together with a few others belonging to the church of Claverack, inaugurated a movement contemplating a new church enterprise. The result was the organization, on the twentieth day of September of that year, of the Reformed Dutch Church of Hudson. From a small shoot it has become a large and flourishing branch of Christ, the living vine. Already it has borne much fruit. God grant it may bear much more!

With the names and virtues of its successive pastors you are all familiar. I need not speak to-day of Dr. Fisher, whose ministry in the church's infancy was so successful, and who, after having filled several prominent positions in our denomination, still lives to prosecute with vigor the work so dear to his heart. I need not speak of Dr. Gosman, that "old man eloquent," whose silvery speech, accompanied with the unction of the Holy One, was so wont to move the minds and hearts of his hearers, and who, in a green old age, was transferred, scarcely two years since, from the Church militant to the Church triumphant. Nor need I speak of Dr. Demarest, my immediate predecessor, who, during his thirteen years' ministry in Hudson, was a model of a Christian pastor, and who now occupies with such ability and success the chair of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology in our Seminary at New-Brunswick. The labors of all its ministers have been greatly blessed of God, and to-day, with its membership larger than ever before, and its sanctuary in process of enlargement and renovation, it gives glory to God and greeting to its mother.

It is not meet, however, that these centennial services should be devoted solely to self-congratulation. There are higher thoughts than these suggested by the gathering of to-day. Certainly two lessons of practical wisdom and experience are derivable from what we have seen and heard.

The history of this church for the past hundred years illustrates most forcibly the conservative influence of an earnest spirituality on the part of God's people. For many years there was little apparent vitality in this portion of the body of Christ. Piety seemed at a comparatively low ebb, and, so long as this was the case, the general interest of the church declined. But when at last a man of God was settled here, whose heart was all aglow with holy fire, and who communicated his own spiritual warmth to the people of his charge, a new and prosperous era was inaugurated. The success of this church is coeval with its spirituality. The trumpet which announced the resurrection of its graces, proclaimed as well the commencement of its growth. And so it always is with the Church of Christ. We who to-day surround as children our venerable mother may learn the lesson that the true conservator of our church-life is deep and all-absorbing spirituality. Piety invariably precedes progress.

But this is not all. The review which has to-day been taken of the past hundred years illustrates with equal pertinency and force the blessed effects of aggressive efforts in behalf of the Redeemer's kingdom. This church since the infusion of spirituality into her life has been an aggressive church. Not satisfied with promoting her own welfare, she has sought to

secure the welfare of others. Her exertions have been largely put forth in the direction of church extension. And to-day she can point to five influential churches which wholly or in part have been organized through her instrumentality. Blessed have been the results of her efforts upon these several churches. But thrice blessed have been their effects upon her. The reflex influence of her endeavors has been almost incalculable. Scattering she has increased, and watering others she has been watered also herself. Thus God ever decrees, and thus he ever executes. The faithful servant is rewarded by and for his faithfulness.

To-day, then, as we close these centennial services, let us gather up these lessons and store them in our minds and hearts. They are lessons derived from the century that is past, which deserve to be practiced in the century that is to come. Be it ours in our several positions and relations to maintain and manifest an earnest spirituality and an aggressive activity. Between one and the other let no divorce be instituted, let no discordance ever be suggested. So far from this, animated by the two in their closest conjunction and harmony, let us illustrate the spirit and perform the acts of our Divine Redeemer. So doing we shall receive his approbation on earth and enjoy his regards in heaven. Our impress will be made upon this century of time. Our glory will be announced through the centuries of eternity.



# APPENDIX.





## APPENDIX.

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[The following paper was furnished by Stephen B. Miller, Esq. :]

### THE MILLER FAMILY.

THERE is a tradition held by the Claverack branch of the Miller family, that their ancestors early came from Holland with the Van Rensselaers. Tradition.

This is confirmed by the following statement:

Daniel D. Barnard, Esq., of Albany, in his discourse upon the life and services of General Stephen Van Rensselaer, speaking of the old Patroon of Holland, says: D. D. Barnard.  
See Haight's Genealogy.

"The Ten Broecks, MULLERS, Hogebooms, Bensons, and Van Cortlandts came with him from Holland in 1637, and it is believed other families came also." 1637.

Judge Benson, in his MSS. to the New-York Historical Society, makes the same statement as to the Van Cortlandts. Benson.

Dr. O'Callaghan, the author of the *History of New Netherlands*, considers the statement of Mr. Barnard erroneous in the following particular: Dr. O'Callaghan.

"The old Patroon of Holland," he asserts, "never came to this country, but transacted all his business through a member of the family sent over by him, termed 'a director.'" He thinks Mr. Barnard to have been misled by a tradition current in the Van Rensselaer family at a later period, that the old Patroon once came over at a very early date, transacted his business, remaining but a short time and returning to Holland.

Dr. O'Callaghan states there is nothing to sustain this tradition; that the evidence derived from the records of the family, and every other source, proves the contrary.

It is his opinion that Johannes Van Rensselaer, or Jan the Baptist, was the first of the family who came to this country, in the year 1651, other members of the family following from time to time.

Mr. Barnard gives no authority for his statement; but, doubtless, received his information from the Van Rensselaer family.

Dr. O'Callaghan is deemed perfectly trustworthy as an histo-

1651 or about rian. We accept his opinion, therefore, fixing the year 1651, Mullers settled. or a period within a few years thereafter, as the time when the family of Mullers or Muldors settled in this country.

The baptismal dates hereinafter given confirm this opinion.

Nykirk. The Van Rensselaers came from the village of Nykirk, or Nieu-kirk, (meaning new church,) situated on the Zuider Zee, in the province of Gelderland, about twenty-five miles south-west from Amsterdam, as located on a very ancient Dutch map of Holland.

Dutch Map at Munsell's.

Coming with them, there can be but little doubt that the *Mullers* (and other families mentioned) came from the same place.

This is confirmed by the friendly feeling evinced by the Van Rensselaers in the duties of sponsorship assumed by them at the baptisms hereinafter mentioned. It is confirmed, also, by the fact that to the children of the Mullers were given the names of different members of the Van Rensselaer family. These names in the families of Muller and Hogeboom can be traced to the present generation. That they came with them as friends and neighbors, and not as strangers, tenants, or subjects, receives further confirmation from the fact that, in the list of those who took the oath of allegiance to the old Patroon, their names do not appear, nor are they to be found in any record of his business transactions with his tenants.

Nykirk. We assume, therefore, from these facts, the village of Nykirk to have been the ancestral home of the Mullers in Holland.

Property. There is evidence furnished at a later period that they were possessed of property considerable in amount for that very early day.

Cornelis Stephense. The name Cornelis Stephense Muldor shows its possessor to have been the son of Stephen Muldor, (Stephense meaning the son of Stephen.)

There is no evidence to be found that Stephen, his father, ever came to Albany.

Cornelis Stephense, first. We give, therefore, Cornelis Stephense Muldor as the ancestor of the Mullers in this country.

1683. The first trace we have of the family in Albany is in the year 1683.

In the *Annals of Albany* are to be found translations of the Record of Baptisms of the First Dutch Reformed Church of Albany. Therein we find the following, the year only being given. These names are all doubtless Muldor in the original, but appear as Mullers in the translation. When and how the change from Muldor to Muller, and subsequently to Miller, occurred, we are unable to say.

# BAPTISM OF THE CHILDREN OF CORNELIS STEPHENSE MULDER AND HILLITIE LOOCKERMANS.

(We find a record of baptisms of children of Jacobus and 1683.  
Mary Loockermans, probably the parents of Hillitie. Jacobus  
was a deacon in the First Dutch Church in 1700.)

## Sponsors.

1683.	Peter Muller,	By Dominie Godfrey Dellius.	{ Anna Van Renselaer, Peter Loockermans, Killian Van Renselaer.
1685.	Cornelis Muller,	" " "	{ Geritt Van Esch, Maria Van Esch, his wife.
1693.	Cristopel Muller,	" " "	{ Peter Schuyler, Anna Van Renselaer.
1695.	Arriantjie Muller,	" " "	{ Wessel Ten Broeck, Catyriche Loockermans, his wife.
1700.	Killianem Muller,	" Nucella.	{ Peter Van Brugge, Maritjie Schuyler.

We find no trace of the family again until 1717. In that year 1717.  
Cornelis Stephense, as appears by his will, (a copy of which is  
hereto attached,) resided in Albany, in "the Brewers Street,"  
on the river side thereof. The Brewers Street was first known  
as Handlaer Street, then Court, the Brewers, North-Market,  
and now as Broadway.

On the 22d day of October, 1718, Cornelis Stephense Mulder Oct. 22, 1718.  
purchased of Captain Hendrick Van Renselaer a tract of land  
in the town of Claverack, and, as appears by the will aforesaid,  
resided thereon in that year.

At that time he had eleven children, and was, doubtless, ad-  
vanced in years. We have no date of his death. His body lies Burial.  
buried with many of his descendants in the family burial-ground,  
still in existence and use, on the farm of Mr. Herman Miller, in  
the field fronting his residence, on the left side of the road lead-  
ing southerly from Claverack village.

This was the farm upon which Stephanis, the son of Cornelis  
Stephense, settled.

In the south-west corner of the present orchard of Herman Tradition.  
Miller, it is said, are buried the negroes who died belonging to  
the different members of the family.

His children were as follows :

Jeremias, his oldest son,	Killianem,
Stephanis,	Jannetjie, wife of Peter Hoge-
Johannis,	boom.
Peter,	Maritjie, wife of Stephanis Van
Cornelis,	Alen,
Jacobus,	Arriantjie.
Cristopel,	

Jacobus remained in Albany, and the following records indicate that Johannis and Cornelis also remained.

1717 In the year 1717, *Johannis Muller*, with Jan Van Ness, Christopel Yetts, and Philip Van Veghte, was appointed Fire Master for the Third Ward.

1759 In 1759, *Maria Muller*, wife of *Cornelis Muller*, held pew No. 30 in the First Dutch Reformed Church. The sexes at that time occupied separate seats. ,

1766 In 1766, Cornelis Muller was paid by the city £18 7s. 3d. for seventy loads of wood for the use of the city watch.

Killianem is known to have settled in Claverack.

Christopel and Jeremiah are believed to have done so, the former the ancestor of the Races, and the latter of the Hon. John J. Miller branch of the family.

Of the location of the rest of the children we have no information other than what the following records, found in the State Historical Department at Albany, give :

1761, May 28,	Gertrey Muller	}
	married to	
	Johannis Hogeboom.	}
1761, Nov. 24,	Peter Muller	}
	to	
	Maria Muller.	}
1762, Nov. 12,	Jeremiah Muller	}
	to	
	Catharine Moore.	}
1763, ———,	Hillitjie Muller	}
	to	
	Stephen Hogeboom.	}
1764, ———,	Jeremiah Muller	}
	to	
	Sarah Hogeboom.	}
1761, Aug. 2,	Stephanis Muller	}
	to	
	Catharine Mesick.	}
1771, April 8,	Hillitjie Muller, 2d,	}
	to	
	Dirck Van De Kar.	}
1772, Aug. 2,	Christopher Muller	}
	to	
	Lyntjie Muller.	}

From Killianem came

1st. Jehoiakim Muller, father of Hon. Killian Miller, of Hudson.  
 Dr. Jacob Miller, of New-York.  
 John Miller, of Greenbush.



2d. Cornelius, a lunatic.

3d. John, supposed to have died in the British army.

The above are all the facts relative to the family interested, which up to this time have come to light. These have been obtained from sources deemed trustworthy, and the information they furnish may be accepted as nearly correct as can at this late day be obtained.

We give the genealogy below complete, as far as ascertained. Genealogy.  
It is possible from these data other branches may be traced hereafter.

1.

*Stephanis Muldor.* Nykirk or Niewkirk, in the province of Gelderland, Holland, twenty-five miles southwest of Amsterdam.

2.

<i>Cornelis Stephense Muldor</i>	}	Albany.	1651, or a period within
married			a few years thereafter.
<i>Hillitjie Loockermans.</i>			

3.

<i>Stephanis Muller</i>	}	Claverack. 1718.
married		
<i>Maritjie Whitbeck.</i>		

Children of Stephanis, (3.)

(A.) <i>Cornelius S. Muller</i>	}	Rachel Hogeboom was the daughter of Cornelius Hogeboom and Lana Johnson, the latter, it is said, connected with a family by the name of Jeremiah Johnson, of Williamsburg or Brooklyn.
married		
<i>Rachel Hogeboom.</i>		

Cornelius S. lived upon the farm now owned by Mr. Robert Esselstyne, in the old house for many years occupied by Mr. E. A part of the house is known to be more than a century old.

Cornelius S. was one of the Vigilance Committee during the Revolution, appointed to arrest Tories, who were confined in the cellar of the old mansion now occupied by Mr. Jeremiah M. Race. He was an

## Genealogy.

ardent Democrat—a working politician. After a sharp contest at the polls, in which he was at one time successful, he was placed in a gig and drawn home by the young men of the town, among whom was the late Joseph D. Monell, Esq., of Hudson.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| (B.) Stephanis Muller<br>married<br>Catharine Mesick.                    | } | Settled either in Albany or Greenbush.  |
| (C.) Hendrick Muller<br>married<br>Arriantjie Van Deusen.                | } | Lived in the old house standing by the creek, for many years occupied by Mr. John Sharp, nearly opposite the present residence of Mr. Robert Esselstyne. Hendrick had two sons, Cornelius and Stephen; the latter the father of Maria, the wife of Augustus Mills, a lady highly esteemed in Claverack. |
| (D.) Jeremiah Muller<br>married<br>Katrine Moore.                        | } | Settled, it is said, in Greenbush.  |
| (E.) Peter Muller<br>married<br>Maritjie Kittle.                         | } | Settled in the neighborhood of Stone Mills.   |
| (F.) Hillitjie Muller<br>married<br>Jacobus Muller.<br>(Branch unknown.) | } | Settled on farm afterward known as the Benner Place, in the eastern part of the town.   |
| (G.) Gertromo Muller<br>married<br>John Hogeboom.                        | } | Settled in the north part of the town.  |
| (H.) Lisbat Muller.  |   | Died at the age of sixteen.   |
| (I.) Lyntjie Muller<br>married<br>Ropie Van Duzer.                       | } | Settled in the Van Deusen neigh-  |

borhood, in the south-west part of Genealogy.  
the town.

## 4.

Children of Cornelius S. Muller (A) and Rachel Hogeboom.

(J.) Stephen Miller  
married  
Jannetjie Esselstyne.

} Daughter of Cornelius Miller  
(branch unknown) and Cornelia  
Esselstyne.

Settled on farm now known as  
the residence of Mr. S. M. Van  
Wyck.

His children were :

1. Rachel, mother of Mr. S. M.  
Van Wyck.

2. William, no descendants.

3. Cornelius, father of Hon.  
Theodore Miller, etc., Hudson.

4. Stephen, father of Mr. Jacob  
W. Miller, etc., Claverack.

5. Cornelia, married first Ells-  
worth Beekman, afterward James  
Ludlum. Descendants in New-  
Jersey.

Stephen was held a prisoner by the British for a period of six  
months during the Revolution, then a young man. He was  
captured by the Indians near Albany, and afterward escaped by  
running, while sent out to cut grass.

(K.) Cornelius C. S. Miller  
married  
Albertie Van Valkenburgh.

} Daughter of Henry Van Valken-  
burgh and Annetjie Van Derpoel,  
of Kinderhook.

He resided on a portion of the  
present Robert Esselstyne farm, on  
the hill, where his daughter Maria  
still lives. His children were :

1. *Rachel*, wife of Mr. John  
Gaul, deceased, of Hudson, father  
of Hon. John Gaul, Jr., etc.

2. *Nancy*, wife of Mr. Jacob  
Whitbeck, of Claverack.

3. *Jane*, second wife of Mr. John  
Gaul.

## Genealogy.

4. *Maria*, unmarried.

5. *Cornelius*, married Cornelia Skinkle, descendants in Wayne county, N. Y., and Michigan.

6. Henry C., lately deceased, of Hudson.

7. Magdalen, wife of Mr. George Philip Horton, of Philmont.

8. Annie, unmarried, deceased.

9. Albertjie, unmarried, died young.

(L.) Jeremiah Miller married  
Cornelia Esselstyne. } Daughter of Richard Esselstyne,  
of Claverack.

He resided at Nobletown, (now in Hillsdale.) His children were : Rachel, Maria, Margaret, Richard, John, and Stephen. Descendants not known.

(M.) Peter Miller married  
Rebecca Spohr. } Settled in the Red Mills neighborhood.

His children were : Rachel, Cornelia, and Cornelius. No descendants known to be living.

(N.) Maritjie Miller married  
Tobias Hogeboom. } Settled in the north part of the town.

His children were: Peter and Lana. No descendants known to be living.

(O.) Lana (or Magdalen) Miller married  
Douw Fonda. } Settled near the Stone Mills.  
No children.

5.

Cornelius S. Miller married  
Cummatjie Bronk. } His second wife, a resident of  
Coxsackie. His children were :  
1. Jonas, who married Catharine

(Cummatjie was baptized on the day of the dedication of the present Claverack church—a century ago.)

Cornelius S. Miller  
married  
Gertrude Van De Kar.

Race. His descendants reside in Genealogy, Wayne county.

2. Annetjie, unmarried.

} From Half Moon, Saratoga Co.  
His third wife, by whom there were no children.

### IN THE NAME OF GOD AMEN

The three and Twentieth day of February in the fifth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George by the Grace of God of Great Brittain france & Ireland King Defender of the faith &c. and in the year of our Lord Christ one thousand seven hundred Eighteen and Nineteen, I Cornelis Stephense Mulder of Claverack in the Mannor of Renselaerswyck in the County of Albany yeoman being in good health and of sound and perfect memory (thanks be to almighty god for the same) and calling to mind the uncertain State of this Transitory life and that all flesh on Earth must yield to Death, when it shall please god to Call, and being desirous to settle things in order Doe make this my last will & Testament in manner & form following. Revoakeing and absolutely annulling by these presents all and every Testament and Testaments will and wills heretofore by me made and declared Either by word or by writeing notwithstanding any Promise to the Contrary or Clause derogatory in the same, and this to be taken, only for my Last will and Testament and none other, first I bequeave my Soul to almighty god my maker and to Jesus Christ my Redeemer and to the holy Ghost my Sanctifyer and my body to the Earth from whence it came to be burried in a decent and Christian manner, there to Rest untill my soul and body shall meet again, and be Joyned together att the joyfull Resurrection, and be made partakers of the never fadeing joys of unmortality which god in mercy thro' the merrits of Jesus Christ alone hath promised and prepared for all those that truly & unfeignedley Repent and belevee in him and Touching such Temporall Estate of Land houses goods and Chattels as the Lord hath been Pleased farr above my deserts to bestow upon me I Doe order give bequeave and dispose of the same in manner and form following.

2dly I Give and bequeave unto my Eldest Son Jeremias Mulder one horse or ten pounds Currant money of the Colony of New york to be paid or deliverd unto him out of my Estate before any Division is to be made, in Right of his Premiginitor or first born, and that he shall make no further pretence on my Estate but to be satisfied with that share or portion as hereafter shall be made to him—

3dly I Give and bequeave unto my Daughter Arrieantje Mulder a fitt and Convenient out sett (provided she doth not marry before my decease)



to be deliverd unto her by my Executors hereafter named, out of my Estate before any Division is to be made—

4thly I Doe give make and bequeave (for the Consideration hereafter mentioned) unto my four Sons Stephanis Mulder Cornelis Mulder Christophel Mulder and Killiaen Mulder their heirs and assigns for Ever all my Land and woodland Scituate lying and being at Claverak in the mannor aforesaid with the house barn Barraks orchard and other the premises and appurtenances thereunto belonging as the same was made over and granted unto me by Capt. Hendrick van Renselaer on the two & twentieth day of october one thousand seaven hundred & Eighteen as by the Indenture thereof may more fully and at Large appear, for which the sd. Stephanis Mulder Christophel Mulder Cornelis Mulder and Killiaen Mulder their heirs Executors or administrators shall pay or Cause to be paid unto my Children hereafter named (viz.) Jeremias Mulder Peter Mulder Jacob Mulder Johan-

Δ Killian Mulder

nis Mulder Δ Jannetie wife of Peter Hooageboom, Maritie wife of Stephanis van Alen and Arriaentie Mulder their and every of their Respective heirs Executors admrs. or assigns Each and every one of them an Equall just Eleventh part of the sume of four hundred and fifty Pounds Currant money of New york aforesaid on or before four years after my decease

5thly I Doe Give make and bequeave unto my Son Johannis Mulder his heirs and assigns for Ever my house and Lott of Ground Scituate Lying and being in the City of Albany in the Brewers Street on the west side thereof having on the north the house and Lott of my Son Jacob Mulder on the south the house and Lott of Samuel Pruyn on the East and west the Comon Streets on Condition that he my said Son Johannis Mulder his heirs Executors or administrators shall pay or cause to be paid unto my ten Children hereafter named viz Jeremias Mulder Stephanis Mulder, Peter Mulder, Cornelis Mulder, Jacob Mulder, Christophel Mulder, Killiaen Mulder, Jannetie wife of Peter Hooageboom, Marritie wife of Stephanis van Alen and Arriaentie Mulder their and every of their Respective heirs Executors admrs. or assigns Each and Every of them an Equall just Eleventh part of one hundred and ten Pounds Currant money aforesaid on or before four years after my decease

6thly My will and Desire is and I Do order that after my decease all my goods and Chattels and moveable Estate of what kind or nature the same may be and as then shall be found shall be Equally divided among my aforesaid Eleven Children their Respective heirs or assigns share and share alike,—

It is my Expresse will and desire and I doe order that who of my said four sons that shall happen to Possess and Enjoy the house and hoffstead at Claverak aforesaid where I now life shall be oblidged to keep maintain and support my said son Peter Mulder (who is non Compus mentus) dureing his naturall life with good Cloathing meat drink washing & Lodgeing for which such of my said sons shall have & Receive the Eleventh part of the

money and moveable Estate which my said Son Peter is to have & Receive, in case no such maintenance as aforesaid—

And my will and desire is that in case any of my said four Sons Called Stephanis, Cornelis, Christophel, or Killiaen Mulder shall be Inclind or willing to dispose or sell his share in the house and land at Claverak aforesaid above given and bequeathed unto him such son shall be oblidge to sell and dispose his share & Right to his other three Brethren Last named and that for such a sum of money as his other Brethren & Sisters or the major part of them shall appraise such share to be worth, which if they Refuze to pay that then such son shall be at Liberty to dispose and sell the same to any other person as he shall think fitt & convenient And Lastly I Doe make Consitute and appoint my Sons Jeremias Mulder and Stephanis Mulder to be Executors and administrators of this my Last will and Testament In Testimony Whereof I the said Cornelis Stephense Mulder have hereunto sett my hand and seale the day and year above written

N B. that the word Killiaen Mulder was Interlind between the fifteenth & sixteenth line in the fourth article before signing & sealing

CORNELIS STEPHENSE  
MULDOR

Signd seald publishd and Declard }  
in the presence of us. }

SAMUEL PRUYEN  
PIETER WINNE  
PHILIP LIVINGSTON

[The following paper was contributed by William Leggett Bramhall, Esq:]

### HOGEBOOM FAMILY.

JEREMIAH and Johannes were two sons of Killian Hogeboom, (or as the name is now spelled in Holland, Hogen Boom.) Jeremiah, it appears, was born in Holland on the 5th of April, 1712, and accompanied his father to this country, where he settled in the town of Claverack, on the site of the present village of that name. There was born the younger son, Johannes, who married Albertie, daughter of Johannes and Sara Van Alen, of Kinderhook; and had by her seven sons and four daughters: Johannes, Bartholomew, Cornelius, Lawrence, Peter, Abraham, James, Johanache, Heleche, Albertie, Catherine. He (Johannes) afterward moved to the north-eastern part of the town, and settled on the site of the houses subsequently built by his son Lawrence, and grandson, Tobias L. Hogeboom, in the present town of Ghent, which was set off on the 3d of April, 1818. Here his sons settled around him, Lawrence taking that portion of the old farm now partly covered by the lower part of the village of Claverack, until about 1767, when he sold it, and removed to his father's residence. The daughters, Helache and Catherine, married, and removed to Schoharie county; Johanache married Judge Jeremiah Miller, and continued to reside in Claverack, between that village and Mellenville; and Albertie married Hon. Peter Van Ness, and lived in Kinderhook, on the place since occupied by Martin Van Buren, and called Lindenwald. James, the

younger son, married Albertie Van Alen of Kinderhook, and lived in Claverack until about 1800, when he removed to Austerlitz, and thence to Mayfield, Montgomery county.

Lawrence married Hester, daughter of John Leggett, of that part of the town known as West-Ghent, their old homestead. Their three eldest children, John L., Albertine, and James L., were born in the present village of Claverack, and the others, Tobias L., Bata, Peter L., and Lawrence, were born in the "old stone house" in the present town of Ghent. Johannes married Gertrude, daughter of Stephen Miller of Claverack, and settled about half a mile to the north-east of his father's, where his seven children were born. Abraham married Maria, daughter of Jacob Vosburgh, of Kinderhook, and settled on the site of the present county-house in Ghent, where his ten children were born. Cornelius Hogeboom married Sarah, daughter of Sarah Vosburgh, of Kinderhook, and lived in a stone house to the north-west of his father's, where were born to him four children. He was shot at Hillsdale by the anti-renters, while on duty as Sheriff of the county, and died in October, 1791, in the forty-fifth year of his age, his widow outliving him but a few months, and dying of grief in the following January. His youngest son, John C., then Deputy-Sheriff, was appointed to succeed him. He was then twenty-three years of age, and had been three years married to Margaret Van Vleck, by whom he had seven children, all born in Claverack. Ann, the fifth child, married the late Prof. Porter, of Yale College; and Henry, the youngest and only survivor, is an able and honored jurist of the Supreme Court. John C. was elected to the Assembly in 1796, and served three years; was chosen one of the Council of Appointment in February, 1803; served in the State Senate 1801-4, and in 1812 was chosen one of the presidential electors, when he cast his vote for Clinton and Ingersoll. He died in the house in which he was born, in June, 1840, aged seventy-two years. Bartholomew married Sally Van Valkenburgh, and resided about a mile to the eastward of the old homestead. He had nine children, one of whom, Albertie, married John J. Vosburgh, and has numerous descendants.

Jeremiah Hogeboom, son of Killian and brother of Johannes, was born in Holland on the 5th of April, 1712, and settled with his brother in Claverack. His son Peter was born in January, 1753, married Hannah Dutcher, and removed after the war of 1812 to Canada, where he died in June, 1843. He had two daughters, who did not survive him, and one son, George, now a resident of Grand Rapids, Mich.

Peter's elder brother, Stephen, continued to reside, and finally died, on his father's farm at Claverack. He was a member of the fourteenth session of the Assembly in 1791; of the sixteenth, in 1792-3; of the nineteenth, in 1796; of the Constitutional Convention in 1801, which met at Albany, Oct. 13th, and adjourned Oct. 27th. In 1805 he was elected to the State Senate, and served four years therein.

He left six children: Christina, who married John Russell, of Troy; Jenny; Polly; Nancy, who married Benjamin Moore, of Newtown, L. I.;

Catherine, who married Gen. Samuel B. Webb, father of James Watson Webb, and grandfather of Major-Gens. A. S. Webb and Geo. W. Morell; and Killian, who kept the old homestead, married a daughter of Captain John Mills, a retired officer of the British army, and served in the Assembly in 1798 and 1799. He left four children, Charlotte Mary; Eliza Caroline; Stephen K., who inherited the farm of his father; and John.

Stephen K. was born in 1802, married Mary Elizabeth, daughter of John I. Miller, and had seven children. He sold his farm in Claverack in 1866, and was the last Hogeboom to leave it.

## GENEALOGY IN PART OF HOGEBOOM FAMILY.

[Furnished by Hon. Henry Hogeboom.]

Johannes Hogeboom married Albertie, daughter of Johannes Van Allen.

Their children were:

Johannes Hogeboom, (C,)

Abraham Hogeboom,

Bartholomew Hogeboom,

Cornelius Hogeboom, (A,) father of John C. and grandfather of Henry.

Lawrence Hogeboom, (B,) father of Tobias L. and grandfather of John T.

Peter Hogeboom.

James Hogeboom.

Jannetie Hogeboom,

Helletie Hogeboom,

Albertie Hogeboom.

who married Jacob Huyck.

*I think* (not certain) that it was one of these sisters who married *Peter Van Ness*, of Kinderhook, father of

General John P. Van Ness, Mayor of Washington.

William P. Van Ness, United States District

Judge of New-York,

second of Aaron Burr

in duel with Hamilton.

Cornelius P. Van Ness, Minister to Spain and  
Collector of New-York.

Catharine Hogeboom married — Huyck.

(C) Johannes Hogeboom married Gertrude Miller, daughter of Stephen, and had several children—Stephen, Albertie, Helletie, Polly, Sarah, John, Gertrude.

(A) Cornelius Hogeboom (son of Johannes) was born July 2d, 1739, was married to Sarah Vosburgh July 14th, 1761; was shot and killed in Nobletown (Hillsdale) October 22d, 1791, being then *Sheriff* of the county of Columbia.

Sarah Vosburg (wife of Cornelius Hogeboom) was born November 21st, 1733, and died January 16th, 1792.

Their children were:



- Richard C. Hogeboom, who married Jane Hoes, sister of the late Lucas Hoes, of Kinderhook.
- Peter C. Hogeboom, who married (I think) Atty Van Allen.
- Alida Hogeboom, who married John Hoes.
- John C. Hogeboom, who married *Margaret Van Slyck*. J. C. H. was twice or more sheriff of Columbia, once (I think) Member of Assembly, once (or more) State Senator; Member of the Council of Appointment; an intimate friend of old George Clinton and of De Witt Clinton, Ambrose Spencer, Judge Van Ness, and others.
- John C. Hogeboom was born April 15th, 1768. Died June 21st, 1840.
- His wife, Margaret Van Slyck, was born February 2d, 1766. Died April 22d, 1841.
- They were married March 5th, 1787.
- Their children were:
- Cynthia Hogeboom, born July 5th, 1789. Died December 7th, 1813.
- Catharine Hogeboom, born February 21st, 1794. Died (I think) March, 1859; married (I think in 1817) to Abraham A. Van Buren, (brother of President Martin Van Buren;) afterward married, in 1841, to Rev. George H. Fisher.
- Sarah Hogeboom, born September 2d, 1791. Died February 13, 1819.
- Cornelius Hogeboom, born December 21st, 1796. Died May 30th, 1857. He married Martha Peck, of New-Haven, (I think in 1822,) by whom he had several children—Margaret, Harriet, John Henry, and William B. The latter died in the war of the rebellion.
- Ann Hogeboom, born April 30th, 1799. Died, I think, in 1848 or 1849. She married Addison Porter, (I think in October, 1820,) and had several children—John Addison Porter, (afterward professor at Yale College;) Sarah Ann, who married Van Dyck, and subsequently Campbell; Catharine, who married Professor George M. Greene; William A., lawyer at Chicago; Henry; Jane Eliza, who married Grant; Charles H., afterward Professor at Albany and at Middlebury.
- Peter Hogeboom, born August 18th, 1803. Died September 23d, 1841. He married Ann Halbert and had children, who are all dead.
- Henry Hogeboom, born February 25th, 1809. Married Jane Eliza Rivington, daughter of Colonel James Rivington, and granddaughter of old John Rivington, (the king's printer,) of New-York. She died March 25th, 1858, at Hudson.



Their children were :

Susan Rivington Hogeboom,

born September 29th, 1833, who married William Boirs, of Northampton, September 21st, 1859, and has two children living.

John C. Hogeboom,

born February 8th, 1837, who married Clara, daughter of Charles Esselstyn, May 15th, 1862. They have no children living.

Margaret Hogeboom,

unmarried.

(B) Lawrence Hogeboom,

(son of Johannes,) born ———. Died March 14th, 1805. Married Hester Leggett, daughter of John. She was born July, 1739. Died March 11th, 1832.

Their children were :

John L., Albertine, James L., who was Member of Congress from Rensselaer county, and lived at Castleton.

Tobias L.,

who lived at Ghent, and was father of Helen, wife of Dr. James Hogeboom, of Castleton ; Eliza, wife of Dr. Charles H. Bramhall, just deceased ; Joseph John Tobias, born January 31st, 1816, now of New-York, General Appraiser in Custom-House, and formerly Member of Assembly and County Judge of Columbia.

Tobias L. was born November 2d, 1770, and died June 14th, 1849. He married Eliza Power, daughter of Joseph Power.

I am myself unable to trace the genealogy of the branches of the Hogeboom family collateral to my own, and must refer you for information to Mrs. Tobias L. Hogeboom, of Ghent or New-York, and William Leggett Bramhall, son of Charles H. Bramhall, Esq., of No. 154 East Forty-ninth street, New-York, who has taken pains to collect many facts in regard to our genealogy.

The *Hogebooms*, however, were among the respectable and prominent families of Claverack.

It was of a Peter Hogeboom that Claverack Landing (now Hudson) was in part bought.

Stephen Hogeboom was, as you know, the father of

Mrs. Webb, mother of James Watson Webb ;

Mrs. Thomas, whose husband was, I think, *General* Thomas ;

Mrs. Russell, mother of Ambrose S. Russell ;

Mrs. Moore, of Claverack ;

William Hogeboom, father of Stephen K. Hogeboom.

Judge John J. Miller's mother was, I think, a Hogeboom, or one of the Hogebooms married his sister.

The Hogebooms were also intermarried with the Storms of Mellenville.

In addition to the above, Mr. Stephen B. Miller furnishes some information of the intermarriage, at earlier dates, between the Hogebooms and the Millers, thus :

1. In 1717, Cornelius Stephense Miller had a daughter, Jannetie, who was the wife of Peter Hogeboom.

2. His son Stephanus had a son, Cornelius S., who married Rachel Hogeboom, daughter of Cornelius Hogeboom and Sara Johnson.

3. Stephanus had also a daughter, Gertrau or Gertrude, who married John Hogeboom, who settled in the north part of the town.

(These are probably the same persons mentioned on the first page of my genealogy (C) as Johannes Hogeboom and Gertrude Miller. They lived over the hill, east of Tobias L. Hogeboom's.)

4. Cornelius L. had a daughter, Maritie, who married Tobias Hogeboom, and I am unable to tell whose son the latter was.

5. Cornelius S. Miller's son, Killianem, (probably Killian,) had a daughter, Helletie, who married a Stephen Hogeboom.

Jehoiakim A. Van Valkenburgh (formerly County Clerk of this county) informed me that he was connected by blood or marriage—I think by blood, through his mother—with Peter Macy Hogeboom.

I am sorry not to be able to trace the history of my family further. I might have obtained much information about it doubtless, from my father, (who died in June, 1840,) but I neglected to do so, and have derived most of what I do know about it from Mrs. Tobias L. Hogeboom, or through her, whose memory, though she is now quite advanced, was, when I last saw her, still very excellent.

Yours truly,

HUDSON, September 6, 1867.

H. HOGEBOOM.

REV. E. S. PORTER.

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#### MR. DICKIE'S NOTE.

REV. DR. E. S. PORTER :

CLAVERACK, August 30, 1867.

DEAR SIR: In your able address, delivered at our centennial celebration day before yesterday, I discovered that you, in searching over our history, found among other names that of my revered grandfather, Caspar Conyne, (or, as it was written in his day, Kasparis Konyne,) as one worthy of notice.

If not out of place, I would like to make mention of an incident in his life that the family have always looked upon as one of some importance. During the darkest period of our Revolution he (at that time holding a commission of captain) received a furlough, came home to visit his family, and while there, reposing in his own house, about midnight, a noise was heard by his wife. She awoke him, telling him she believed there were robbers in the house. They sprang up and found the house surrounded. Every window had a sentinel, and they found it too late to give an alarm.

The robbers, or Tories, as they were called, had already entered the house. They carried away every available thing they could, and such as they could not, destroyed. They emptied the cream-pots upon the floors and the feathers from the beds, mixing them together. They took such articles as jewelry, going to one of the family and taking hold of her hand, asking her for her diamond ring, she having, while they were there, slipped it from her finger and put it in her bosom. She gave some reason that saved the ring. Among the articles taken by them were a pair of gold sleeve-buttons belonging to grandfather, and eight hundred dollars in money. At last they had grandfather taken into a room, and, with a cord from his drum, fastening to a beam above, hung him by the neck; but in jerking the chair from under him the rope broke, and that saved his life. They then had him, with all the family, taken to the cellar of the house, and locked them in. While there, they heard the tread of the sentinels passing the window of the cellar. Grandfather about this time, taking an iron bar, broke open the door, ran up, and out the door, to the road, found a man just then passing on horseback, caught hold of the bridle, and inquired who he was. He found him to be a neighbor; invited him to come in and see what had been done.

The following morning, as the family gathered around the breakfast-table, Kasparis Konyne offered thanks to God that they had their barns filled, (it being fall, or the fore part of winter,) but, sad to say, shortly after, their barns were burnt, with the contents. The barn built by him in its stead is still standing upon the place now occupied by John W. Jenkins. For all this he never received any other compensation than the reward of having a clear consciousness of having served his country during the darkest days of the Revolution.

Among those guilty of this, but two were ever discovered, convicted, and found guilty. Having a flag of his in their possession, they were found guilty and hanged. Others not far off were suspected. I, having had this handed down, have watched the dealings of God in his providence, and think I see a confirmation of the truth "that the wicked shall not go unpunished."

Should you think any part of this of interest worth publishing with the interesting matter of our centennial celebration, it is yours.

I remain yours very respectfully,

JOHN H. DICKIE.















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